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ambitions
extinguished
by Lawler

THE TIMES

30

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ONLY IN THE TIMES

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Head gives warning on two-year-olds being sent to school



Holmes: grave doubts

By JOHN O'LEARY
AND DAVID CHARTER

MANY parents are treating their children "like young animals," sending them to nursery schools while they are still in nappies, the head of an independent schools association said yesterday.

Record numbers of two-year-olds are going to school and Paddy Holmes said she feared for the future as many children stayed with their mothers only while they were biologically dependent on them.

Mrs Holmes, chairman of the Independent Schools Association In-

corporated, was speaking at a press conference to announce the first rise in the number of privately educated pupils for five years — an increase almost entirely due to the number of two- and three-year-olds at school.

The Independent Schools Information Service disclosed that 4,584 two-year-olds attended private schools last year — 27 per cent more than in 1994 and the biggest increase for any age group. Another 11,500 children aged three produced a 7.4 per cent increase in pre-school enrolments.

Mrs Holmes, headmistress of Ditcham Park School in Petersfield, Hampshire, said the sector was

responding to parental demand, but she harboured grave doubts about the age at which some children were enrolled. "We are really beginning as a nation to produce children treated in many ways more like young animals, staying with their mothers only as long as they are biologically dependent," she said. "Some children even in nappies are now going to school and losing that bond because both parents are working."

Mrs Holmes said the trend resulted from the pressures on mothers to hold down a career, and she sympathised with parents. "For some, a prep school is the only alternative to a

nanny," she said. "It works well socially and it works well educationally. But we may live to reap the dividends in social terms of children separated from their parents from the age of two."

A growing number of preparatory schools now have nursery departments taking two-year-olds. Some also have creches for even younger children.

Chris Evers, a headmaster who chairs the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools, said most young children attended nurseries only part-time. "We wouldn't be doing it if we thought we were

driving a wedge between parents and their children." His association opposed "hothousing" young children and had issued guidelines on "constructive play" for two-year-olds.

But Mrs Holmes said research had shown that lengthy separation of young children from their parents often caused psychological damage. They could experience feelings of rejection, becoming insecure and withdrawn.

Earlier this year, Tony Evans, chairman of the Headmasters' and

Continued on page 2, col 8

Isis report, page 4



66 Tories vote to cut power of EU court

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

MORE than 60 Conservative MPs showed their disdain for the European Union yesterday by supporting a backbench Bill to limit the power of the European Court of Justice in Britain.

Iain Duncan-Smith's Bill had no chance of becoming law, but it was seen as an important test of backbench opinion on Europe and it attracted the support of 66 Tories, including the former Cabinet ministers John Redwood, Norman Lamont, John Biffen and Kenneth Baker, as well as Anthony Combs, a parliamentary aide who later apologised for his action.

Many of them later made plain that they had backed the measure to register a wider protest at recent developments in the EU, most notably the ban on British beef. They also claimed that they were acting in line with a more pronounced mood of scepticism within the country as demonstrated by the growing interest in Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party, which is threatening to field up to 600 candidates at the next election.

Mr Redwood will today meet Sir James to explore his plans for a referendum on all aspects of Britain's relationship with the rest of Europe and to consider whether there

are any chances of a compromise that would discourage him from fielding candidates at the election.

In the Commons, however, John Major shrugged aside any thought of a deal. Taunted by Labour backbencher Donald Anderson, who asked "what further measures of appeasement" he and Tory chairman Brian Mawhinney had in mind "to placate the patriot across the water", he replied: "The answer is quite clear — none."

New indications that the Referendum Party may target pro-European Tories in marginal seats are causing fresh alarm among Conservative MPs and Mr Redwood said last night that his objective today was to ensure that the Conservatives were the beneficiaries of the anti-federalist vote at the election. "I will tell him that splitting that vote between us and him will let in the Labour Party."

Mr Redwood and Norman Lamont had earlier stood beside Mr Duncan-Smith as he sought curbs on the European Court, saying: "We are witnessing a process of judgement beyond the traditional scope of the British national courts and cuts across the vital concept that law-makers should be fully accountable to their electorate. Furthermore, once it makes such a ruling, it has been decreed by the court that the relevant power is forever lost to the national government."

Mr Duncan Smith's measure was rejected by 83 votes to 77, thanks largely to opposition MPs who were joined by only five pro-European Tories.

Peter Riddell, page 10
Michael Gove, page 18
Leading article, page 19



Owen Oyston, chairman of Blackpool Football Club, leaves court accompanied by his wife Vicki and two daughters, Karen and Heidi

Tycoon denies rapes at castle

By KATE ALDERSON

OWEN OYSTON, the millionaire media tycoon, raped two teenage models at his 16th century castle, it was alleged yesterday.

Mrs Helen Grindrod, QC, prosecuting, told Liverpool Crown Court that the 62-year-old chairman of Blackpool Football Club and owner of a number of regional magazines and radio stations, forced one of the girls to have sex in a four poster bed, and the other to take part in a three-in-a-bed session at his home Cloughton Hall, near Lancaster, Lancashire.

Mrs Grindrod said the girls, then aged 16 and 17, had believed Mr Oyston could help their modelling careers, and stayed silent about their ordeal for years fearing that nobody would believe them. Mr Oyston denies the charges.

Full report, page 3

Thought for the Day clergy are ordered to take a rest

By RUTH GLEDHILL AND ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE BBC has been accused of asking presenters on Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* to make it politically safe.

Three of the best-known contributors to its popular religious slot on *Today* are being "rested" and the decision has provoked anger.

In a letter to contributors, David Coomes, the producer, says some scripts, especially those on political issues, are too simplistic. He insists: "Thought should not be about government or even opposition bashing. Everybody else in *Today* does that."

Canon Philip Crowe, former principal of Salisbury theological college, who has done more than 200 *Thought for the Day* over 20 years but is being "rested" for a year or so "to make way for new names", accused the BBC of vetting his copy to make it politically safe.

He said: "I am told that *Thought* must be less immediate, less topical. The result is that *Thought for the Day* is

becoming *Thought for Yesterday*." The Ven George Austin, Archdeacon of York and Dr Leslie Griffiths, former president of the Methodist Conference, have also been told that they are to be "rested".

In a letter to the three clergy, Mr Coomes insists: "I use the term 'rested' genuinely; all strands need refreshing from time to time, and there is no reason why old favourites cannot return as others in turn are rested."

One BBC insider said that

the changes were needed because, "at times the political element in the slot is overdone and the comment is not as sophisticated as it might be."

John Humphrys, a *Today* presenter, said that rather than have a slimmer list of contributors, he would prefer to see a longer list. "I find this a rather surprising decision. With six *Thoughts* per week. 52 weeks a year, I don't know why we have to have a smaller list."

Leading article, page 19



Off the air: Dr Griffiths, Mr Austin and Canon Crowe

Princess says surgery visit was not stunt

The Princess of Wales yesterday denied that her decision to watch a heart operation while being filmed on television was a publicity stunt. The successful surgery on Arnaud Wambo, 7, from Cameroon, was performed by Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub. A statement by the Princess's publicity office made clear that she would continue to work with charities in whichever ways she chooses.

Medical Briefing, page 7

Chechen leader's death reported

Reports from Chechnya yesterday claimed that Dzhokhar Dudayev, the rebel leader, had been killed during a Russian air attack.

Khodzhakmed Yerikhanov, a rebel commander, was quoted by the *Jazz* news agency as saying: "Dudayev died together with several people from his close circle." However, some figures in the Chechen leadership denied the reports.

Top earners face extra bill for tax

By KAREN ZAGOR

TOP rate earners will pay extra tax totalling up to £1.5 billion when the new system of self assessment begins to bite next year.

Under the old regime, which was phased out earlier this month, the nine million people who file tax returns had to settle by December. The controversial new system will oblige higher rate taxpayers, who receive extra income from savings and investments, to make two payments in January 1998. One will be retrospective for the whole of the 1996-97 tax year, while the other will be for the first half of the 1997-98 tax year. A second instalment will fall due in July 1998.

Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat MP, has tabled a parliamentary question asking the Chancellor, "if the yield in 1997-98 from higher rate income tax charged by direct assessment on investment income received net of lower rate income tax will be higher under the new system

of self assessment; and what estimate he has made of the extent of the difference."

David Norman, personal financial services manager at KPMG in Leicester, said: "It could be a bit of a shock to some people who will effectively be paying 1½ times the amount they might expect."

The system of self assessment will affect about nine million people, including those who are self-employed, company directors and some employees with extra income, such as interest from savings accounts and other investments. Top rate tax of 40 per cent is paid by those earning in excess of £29,265.

As a result of the transitional rules some higher rate taxpayers will have to pay their whole 1996-97 liability plus the first instalment of their 1997-98 liability in January 1998. That amount will be half of the previous year's liability. Up to £1.5 billion will be levied before the end of the tax year in April.



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ICL that's

Every day, our systems and services help maintain and improve the performance of essential services: electricity, gas, water and telecommunications. Technology that allows us to work at a distance, bring remote and urban areas closer together and help safeguard the environment. ICL Information Technology. IT Systems and Services that support your way of life

Lucifer in grey flannel summons all his wily demons

The event of the day may not be obvious. As heatmaps, registering infra-red radiation, highlight features which escape conventional notice, so a havoc-tracking satellite beamed to detect wickedness at the Commons yesterday would have mapped Prime Minister's Questions — boisterous though it was — in muted colours and blurred outlines.

But upon one quiet detail the satellite's mischief-scanners would have blown a fuse, Iain Duncan-Smith's ten-minute

rule Bill, mildly named the European Communities (European Court) Bill, leaps from that map: a scarlet stratospheric cyclone. The forces of anarchy came spiralling in. The vortex of all evil was gathering on the Tory backbenches. The mad people were convening. Briefly, the Dukes of Hazard had assembled before dispersing to run like demons among us.

Mr Duncan-Smith (C) represents the same Chingford that sent us Norman Tebbit. His declared aim was to

"amend" the European Communities Act. In fact it was to cripple the European Court, but, arguing with cool plausibility, Duncan-Smith walked softly. Only the waistcoat and wild, penetrating stare gave him away.

John Redwood sat beside him, his face too thin and his eyes too wide. Norman Lamont slipped in and sat down between them, like Lucifer in grey flannel descended from the heights. It was chilling how many of them there were, beached by a ebbing



MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

tide, as good men and women, sensing something clammy in the air, drew their coats worriedly about them and hurried out. Redwood nodded as Duncan-Smith spoke. Behind them sat Tony Marlow (C, Northampton North), whose striped blazer and fluorescent opinions had lit the launch of Mr Redwood's leadership bid. Te-

resa Gorman (C, Billericay) bustled in with all the swagger of the Bad Fairy in a village pantomime. No child dared hiss. And who was that, reclining palely in his usual place? John Arbutnot Du Cane Wilkinsons (C, Ruislip-Northwood) scrutinised the carpet for European micro-spy-cameras, sitting patient and motionless

for a portrait in political alienation.

Sir Edward Heath rose to depart, his step slow and weary. At the Bar of the House he paused, turned and peered at the gesticulating Mr Duncan-Smith with a sort of dazed abhorrence, then lumbered out. Sir George Galloway (C, Reigate), in front of Duncan-Smith, smiled a wan smile. Sir George always seems the wrong way up. Hanging upside down from a raft he would look more natural. Nicholas Winterton (C, Mac-

clesfield), in a tie of violent yellow, looked up attentively as Duncan-Smith sneered, to titters, at the absent Sir Edward. To his left sat an animated Ian Paisley (DUP, Antrim North) and a bloodless Peter Robinson (DUP, Belfast East), like a ventriloquist and his dummy.

David Shaw (C, Dover), the only Tory ever to attack Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, kept his head still but flicked his eyes around the chamber. With Mr Shaw you half expect a long sticky tongue to shoot

out and snap you up. Duncan-Smith had all the best tunes Charles Kennedy (Lib Dem, Ross, Cromarty and Skye), opposing, flailed about, a decent man somehow unable to marshal his case. Why, agreeing with Duncan-Smith, and disagreeing with Kennedy, would I fight on Kennedy's side? Because the argument is secondary. Ask first what kind of people are advancing it and why. Mr Duncan-Smith and friends, more numerous by the day, are mad, bad and dangerous to know.

Lack of beef cull policy impedes rapid end to ban

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS AND PHILIP WEBSTER IN LONDON

EUROPEAN farm ministers may agree to ease the ban on British beef exports next week. But a visit by Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, to the Brussels Commission yesterday made clear that Britain had yet to come up with a clear slaughter policy to convince its partners to lift the embargo.

After talks with Franz Fischler, the EU Farm Commissioner, Mr Hogg sounded an optimistic note, saying the pair had "explored together how we can achieve a rapid removal of the ban". The council of farm ministers, which meets next Monday, "is likely to move to support a relaxation of the ban because

of the steps we have taken," he added. Mr Hogg said he had not mentioned the subject of British retaliation, an idea which Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, had implicitly brandished in ministerial talks in Luxembourg on Monday before the Government softened it yesterday.

In London, however, the Government's stance remained confused. In the Commons John Major insisted that the Government would consider other options if the lifting of the ban was "unreasonably withheld".

But with the Foreign Secretary ruling out illegal retaliatory measures, such as

suspending Britain's contributions, Downing Street declined to elaborate on what Mr Major had in mind. It is thought that he was referring to the likelihood that Britain would obstruct and veto EU business if it fails to get its way.

Tony Blair, in an angry exchange with Mr Major in the Commons, called on him to "take a grip". The Labour leader derided the "confusion and incompetence" at the heart of Government policy, likening its strategy to that of the Grand Old Duke of York.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, described the Government's

handling of the BSE crisis as a "fiasco". The Foreign Secretary launches gunboats over breakfast, Tarzan sounds the retreat over lunch and by dinner the poor old Agriculture Minister, on his way to Brussels, is shot in the foot again," he said.

The Government's apparent retreat angered the Eurosceptics. William Cash said the EU ban was itself a form of illegal sanction and demanded Britain suspend its contributions until the situation was resolved.

Despite a visibly friendly rapport with Mr Hogg, Herr Fischler struck a contrasting note. The Commission wanted the ban lifted as soon as possible, he said, but it was still waiting for the final plan for eradicating BSE disease which Britain is committed to present to the Council. "The measures must be enforced. Controls have to convince us that the prerequisites are there for removing the export ban," he said.

Herr Fischler, whose experts are working closely with British officials, noted that the programme to restore confidence in British beef should not be based on the number of animals to be slaughtered but rather on "clear criteria. We are still waiting for proposals in writing," he said.

Mr Hogg, who spoke of the "difficulties" in deciding a British cull, suggested that he was resigned to seeing the ban phased out in stages.

Photograph, page 26

Head quits Malvern after tensions

BY DAVID CHARTER AND JOHN O'LEARY

THE headmistress of a leading independent school unexpectedly resigned yesterday, two years after being recruited from business with no experience of teaching.

Malvern Girls' College in Worcestershire, which costs £11,700 a year for boarders, said Dr Anne Lee left "by mutual agreement".

The Times understands her departure follows a breakdown in relationships between Dr Lee and school governors. They were not unanimous in appointing her from her successful career in management and consultancy in March 1994 and some senior teachers were said to be still unhappy at her lack of teaching experience.

Tension came to a head after Dr Lee, 42, appeared on the BBC's *Panorama* talking about the widespread availability of drugs for young people.

Dr Lee, in an emotional final assembly before clearing her desk, told pupils the headship was the best job she had ever had. In a statement she only hinted at the rift with governors, saying: "I have enjoyed the support of staff, parents and pupils, whose enthusiasm and spirit will stay with me for a very long time."

On *Panorama* on March 25, Dr Lee appeared to suggest a drug culture was rife among her pupils, saying: "I am sad to say that I would not



Anne Lee left school "by mutual agreement"

be surprised to find that by the time they have left here, many of them will have been offered drugs in the holidays."

She added: "The investigations we have done for this programme have brought home to me the reality of what they are confronting and the fact that it is so widely available for them. The fact that almost every one of them says that they have been offered or know where to get drugs wherever they go, it saddens me."

Governors were said to feel disappointed that Dr Lee did

not make a more robust stand against drugs. The college said in a statement that governors had their own views on how to build on the changes Dr Lee had made at the school. "There is a need for a period of calm and consolidation to allow these changes to be fully implemented. The [governing] council, while inaugurating and accepting these changes, has its own views as to the best way to build on these very real achievements."

Influx of boarders, page 4

Schools

Continued from page 1

Headmistresses' Conference, accused some parents of opting out of their responsibilities, so that their children were victims of "opulent neglect". Yesterday Mrs Holmes went much further. "I feel strongly that young children need a one-to-one relationship, not one-to-eight," she said. "It is oversimplifying I know, but if I thought the human race was meant to be brought up like that, we would be born in litters like puppies and not one at a time."

Mrs Holmes, 56, has four young grandchildren, none of whom went to nurseries before the age of four. She founded Ditcham Park 20 years ago and the school caters for 300 children between the ages of four and 16. The Independent Schools Association Incorporated represents more than 300 minor independent schools.

There is fierce controversy among psychologists about the possible damage caused by childcare. Although many researchers argue there is no long-term harm caused by sending young children to school, Mrs Holmes referred to the work of John Bowlby, who linked breaks from both parents to a long-term breakdown in self-esteem.

Bowlby illustrated his "attachment theory" by showing that an infant separated from its parents for a couple of weeks would reject photographs of its parents.

Dr Ned Mueller, a leading clinical child psychologist, said parental care was crucial to the forming of a child's character up to the age of five. Lack of contact with parents could lead to emotional and behavioural problems for the child later in life.

Isis report, page 4

Protesters target abattoirs over dairy calves slaughter

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

ANIMAL welfare campaigners vowed yesterday to target sites where thousands of unwanted dairy calves less than 10 days old will be slaughtered as part of emergency controls against mad cow disease.

Under an £80 million scheme which took effect yesterday, dairy farmers can slaughter newborn calves which they would have been able to export to the Continent to be reared for veal.

Joyce D'Silva, of Compassion in World Farming, said:

"This is the slaughter of the innocent. Animal lovers are horrified that newly-born bull calves are to be killed even before they have had a life. The Government is treating these tiny animals like trash instead of respecting them as sentient creatures capable of feeling pain and fear."

The animal welfare pressure group, which staged month-long protests last year against calf exports, plans to target abattoirs and Ministry of Agriculture offices.

Until March 27 when the European Union imposed a ban on British beef and cattle exports, dairy farmers were

exporting 470,000 surplus calves a year to the Continent for up to £150 a head.

Abattoirs will get £103 for each newborn calf they slaughter. After deducting transport, slaughter and disposal costs, the abattoir will give the balance, which is likely to average about £80, to the farmer. Some 80 abattoirs have been approved to take part in the scheme.

The calves cannot be used for human consumption. The Ministry of Agriculture said the carcasses could be processed for pet food provided the thymus and intestines were incinerated.

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Ministers ready to rebel on divorce

Up to 20 ministers could defy the Government today over its divorce law reforms, Tory rebels claimed yesterday. The rebels, led by the former ministers Edward Leigh and John Patten, are backing amendments calling for the concept of fault to be reinstated and for a cooling-off period of 18 months to two years for couples seeking to split up.

The Government is giving MPs and ministers a free vote on all the most contentious aspects of the Family Law Bill, which is now going through its final stages in the Commons. But the Government would nevertheless be highly embarrassed. Ministers who may back the amendments include John Gummer, Ann Widdecombe, Michael Ancram, James Clappison, and two whips, Patrick McLoughlin and Michael Mates.

Jury damages criticised

Juries cannot be trusted to decide the level of damages against police and the task should be given to judges, Brian Hayes, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, told a conference on civil actions against the police. He said that the Yard would support a move from police investigation of complaints to a fully independent system if this would help public confidence and cut civil actions.

Asylum curbs defeat

The Government suffered a defeat in the House of Lords last night over plans to tighten asylum laws and curb bogus applications. A move backed by the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Runcie of Cuddesdon to provide extra rights to victims of alleged torture was backed by a majority of 19 peers. The government must now decide whether to try to reverse it in the Commons.

Fraud mayor jailed

A mayor who claimed £3,000 in expenses for bogus council engagements was jailed for three months yesterday. Rhys Lewis, 56, who was mayor of Abercromby, Dyfed, claimed mileage for fabricated journeys for three years until an auditor noticed he was being paid far more than other councillors. Lewis, an independent councillor, admitted 15 counts of obtaining money by deception.

Student eviction wrong

A Nigerian student "ought not to have been summarily evicted" from his flat when he was arrested and allowed bail in September 1994 after failing to apply for an extension to stay in Britain, the Court of Appeal ruled. It was unlawful for housing authorities to evict tenants just because they were illegal immigrants, the court said in its judgment against Hackney Borough Council in east London.

Channel 4 apologises

Channel 4 has issued a public apology for the use of bad language in the early evening show *TFI Friday*, presented by Chris Evans. Sir Michael Bishop, the chairman, said the channel regretted three outbursts of swearing on the show, which is broadcast at 6pm, well before the 9pm family viewing watershed. The programme will now be pre-recorded so that swear words can be bleeped out.

Kirk counts the cost of clerics on transfer list

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS involved in bitter feuds with their congregations over issues such as the Virgin Birth, attitudes to homosexuality and even which hymn book to use have cost the Church of Scotland £250,000 in the last five years.

When ministers fall out so badly with their congregations that no reconciliation can be made, the Kirk makes an immediate one-off payment of around £15,000, equal to one year's minimum stipend, to pay for food, clothing and accommodation until another job is found.

A report by the Kirk's Maintenance of the Ministry Committee which will go before the General Assembly next month says: "Often tensions run high and unresolved issues and difficulties become the agenda for a new ministry. Some congregations can have matters to deal with which go back for generations."

Yesterday the Rev Gordon Jamieson, convener of the committee, said: "The breakdown of relations seems to have worsened over the last five years. That is why we have spent £250,000 to enable ministers to live whilst they wait for a new charge or train for another means of livelihood. We can't throw them out on the street, particularly when they may not be to blame for the situation."

Mr Jamieson said attitudes had changed over the last 40 years. The previous generation accepted what a minister said

and did. "Nowadays, ministers have to acquit their congregations with how they wish to do things and a consensus is reached," he said. "In certain cases, there is so much disagreement that they have to part company. And since you can't move a congregation, the minister has to go."

The report to the General Assembly says: "We must ensure that conditions exist where minister and congregation can work together in harmony." It says the best way to end the warfare is to replace any minister whose face does not fit with a specialist Interim Minister.

The report also expresses concern over the ability of the Kirk's 1,300 ministers to live on their stipends which are set to rise slightly to £15,348 this year. Rev John Chalmers, deputy secretary of the Board of Ministry, said that more and more ministers, some of whom work 100 hours a week, found it difficult to make ends meet. "The minimum stipend is all that many families have on which to exist. Where there is no working spouse, the situation tends to be worse, and keeping a manne heated is another worry," he said.

According to the report, the Kirk is currently using around £80,000 of Reserve Fund income to help pay the salaries of its clergy because congregations are not giving enough to meet the minimum stipend.

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Readers

Peter Riddell and Robert Worcester observe a change of political heart among the reading public since 1992

Only a third of the readers of the five broadsheet quality newspapers now support Labour, according to a poll by MORI for The Times. The poll shows that the Conservative Party has lost its position as the favourite of traditionally Conservative readers, such as the *Telegraph*, *Daily Express*, *Sunday Mail* and *The Sun*. The poll shows a 24 per cent drop

Teenage models 'raped by tycoon in castle bedroom'

By KATE ALDERSON

THE multimillionaire Owen Oyston raped two teenage models after they were told he could help their careers, a court was told yesterday.

The girls, aged 16 and 17 at the time, worked for a model agency run by Mr Oyston's friend Peter Martin. They had been told Mr Oyston was a "powerful friend" and that the implication was that he would be useful to them in their hoped-for careers.

Helen Grindrod, QC, for the prosecution, said:

Mr Oyston, chairman of Blackpool Football Club and owner of regional magazines and radio stations, has denied raping one of the girls in 1989 or 1989 and raping and indecently assaulting the other in 1991.

Mrs Grindrod said Mr Martin had a house in Sale, Manchester, known as the models' house, where some of them would stay. The first alleged victim, who was a 17-year-old virgin, stayed at the house in Sale during the week because she lived some distance away and on one occasion was introduced to Mr Oyston at a restaurant.

During a meal at an hotel she was offered a life home, but Mrs Grindrod said that instead of being taken to Sale she was driven north to Claughton Hall, near Lancaster, Mr Oyston's 16th-century castle.

When she arrived between

11.30pm and midnight, the door was opened by the businessman. Mr Oyston, who is married with four children, showed her around briefly before leading her to a bedroom with a four-poster bed.

"She was scared, alone in the middle of nowhere in the middle of the night with a man she hardly knew," Mrs Grindrod said. He asked her to sit on the bed, she refused and asked to go to the bathroom, where she stayed for ten minutes.

The former model, now 25, tearfully told the court that when she returned to the bedroom she found Mr Oyston sitting on the bed naked apart from his shirt.

She said Mr Oyston told her to sit on the bed, which she did because she was "young and frightened". She complied with his instructions to remove her underwear and kept on her dress and jacket.

"I didn't want him to do anything," she told the court. She described how Mr Oyston had allegedly climbed on top of her and said: "Just shut up and do as you are told."

The alleged victim said: "I told him not to have sex with me. He kept saying I could learn you a few things."

She pushed Mr Oyston off and he told her she was being stupid. The woman then ran out of the house. "I was in absolute turmoil," she said. "I was disgusted with myself." She did not tell any-

one about the alleged incident because she was too ashamed. She stayed on at the model agency because her parents were keen for her to succeed as a model and she was afraid of letting them down.

When asked if she was given money by Mr Oyston, she said she had been given £200 and £700 on separate occasions but had not wanted the money. When asked why she accepted it she said: "I was involved with powerful moneyed people."

The woman denied having a relationship with Mr Oyston but Mrs Grindrod said that when he told police that they had had a consensual relationship for about a year.

Mrs Grindrod said that the second alleged victim was 16 years old when she first met Mr Oyston in a restaurant in 1991. She had been living at the house in Sale and Mr Martin had taken her to dinner with other girls from the house and Mr Oyston. It was alleged that Mr Martin told her they were "going to meet a rich guy called Owen Oyston who was one of his friends". She met him but had no conversation with him.

On another occasion after a meal she was told to sit in the back of a car with Mr Oyston, it was alleged. As the car was travelling towards Claughton Hall, Mr Oyston unzipped his trousers and made her have oral sex, the court was told.

Mrs Grindrod said that when they arrived at the hall Mr Oyston took the girl and another young woman to a bedroom. After he had had sex with the young woman, "Oyston then ordered her to take her clothes off and get in bed with him. She did what she was told. Oyston had sexual intercourse with her with the other girl still in the bed," Mrs Grindrod said. "She lay still and unresponsive, making it clear she was not consenting."

The alleged victims complained to the police in 1995. The trial continues.



Claughton Hall, the home of Owen Oyston

Judge injured in struggle to arrest burglar

By A STAFF REPORTER

A JUDGE who tried to arrest a burglar at his local post office was hit over the head with a bottle, a jury was told yesterday.

Anthony King, 53, was attacked by Henry Earl, 33, but still tried to stop him escaping, Guildhall Crown Court was told.

The confrontation put Mr King in hospital. He said he was on his way home from an evening pantomime when he found Earl breaking into the village post office.

He told the thief he was under citizen's arrest, but Earl brandished a bottle of whisky as Mr King blocked his path. Without warning, Mr King was smashed with "full force" over the head, "splitting his head open".

But instead of giving up, Mr King grabbed hold of the robber and struggled, "holding on for grim death" on the pavement for nearly a minute. The "strong, athletic" robber managed to break free after slipping out of his shirt and ran off, pursued by Mr King.

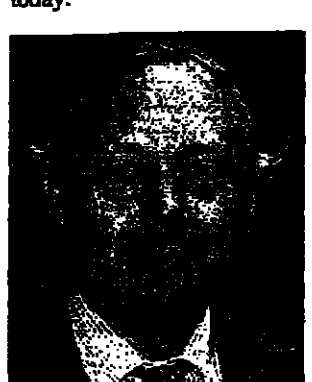
But after a chase across the quiet village of Drayton, in Oxfordshire, where Mr King lives, the thief escaped. Mr King, an Oxford graduate who played rugby and football at university, sits on the Midland and Oxford circuit. He told the court: "I heard a loud banging coming from the shop and the sound of shattering glass. I saw the figure of a man climbing through the

broken glass of the door of the village shop. I ran directly up to the door of the shop and found the glass had been shattered giving access to someone to get in.

"I put my head through the door and knew there was someone in there because I could hear noises near the cash till. After a length of time I called out, 'You needn't think you are going to leave. I am going to arrest you for burglary'."

He added: "Without warning the robber brought the bottle down very forcibly in an overarm action on my head. The effect was to split the skin open."

Earl admits burglary but denies wounding with intent, unlawful wounding and assault on September 22, 1994. The case was adjourned until today.



Judge King, struck over head with whisky bottle

Recorder quits over trip to gay club

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A JUDGE has resigned after allegations that he was involved in gay sex. The resignation of Anthony Russell, 45, who sits on the bench part-time as a crown court recorder, followed claims in a Sunday newspaper about his visit to a men-only club.

Yesterday Mr Russell, a barrister, said in a statement issued through his chambers in Manchester: "I have written to the Lord Chancellor tendering my resignation as a recorder."

He confirmed that he had visited the Greenhouse club in Walsall, West Midlands, where the *News of the World* reported that he spent 30 minutes with two men in the club's "dark room".

He said: "I did visit the premises, having recently received some very distressing personal news. I needed to escape for a couple of hours. My life has been wrecked. My actions have caused no harm to anyone, except myself and my immediate family."

He also wrote to the Attorney-General, resigning as a leading counsel to the Inland Revenue.

Last autumn Judge Thornton, who was then a crown court recorder, faced calls for his resignation after allegations that he had taken part in sex with prostitutes. The judge, who steadfastly refused to resign, was backed by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, who accepted his explanation.

Pregnant RE teacher sacked

By LIN JENKINS

A ROMAN CATHOLIC school said yesterday that it was legally entitled to dismiss a teacher after she became pregnant by the local priest.

Thomas More Upper School, in Bedford, dismissed the religious education teacher because she practised extra-marital sex, placing her in a "morally impossible position". John Bowers, for the school, told an industrial tribunal in London.

Monika O'Neill, 31, is appealing against a tribunal

ruling in 1994 that she was not a victim of sex discrimination. She won an earlier claim that she was unfairly dismissed after it was found she was pregnant by Father Chris O'Neill.

The couple have since married and have three children. Mr O'Neill, who left the church after being banished to a religious retreat, and his wife sat together during the second day of the hearing.

Mr Bowers said: "It was not the pregnancy that was intolerable to the school but the obvious manifestation of ex-

tra-marital sex. It was the moral aspect of her conduct that was an issue."

He said the headmaster initially congratulated her on the pregnancy and offered to arrange married accommodation. When it became clear she did not intend to marry, it was suggested she resign. The school is saying the pregnancy was within an inappropriate relationship which made it not right for her to teach religious education.

Mr Justice Mummery said he would deliver his judgment in a fortnight.



Elizabeth Hlinko says Richard Branson grabbed her



Branson sweeps up Liza Minelli at the party for his New York megastore

Branson dismisses sex claim at opening of American store

From Quentin Letts in New York
RICHARD BRANSON floated down in a silver balloon at the front of his new shop in New York yesterday and then showed the same indifference to danger when questioned about a former employee's sexual harassment claims.

Mr Branson, head of the Virgin group, has been accused of fondling Elizabeth Hlinko, a one-time public relations manager for the company. Ms Hlinko said that the entrepreneur grabbed her breasts at a party at his

Oxfordshire house in 1994. So "distracted" did she become that, after being fired last summer, she "collapsed" and was admitted to hospital.

Mr Branson vigorously denies any impropriety. He said that Ms Hlinko was an opportunist and noted that her harassment suit coincided with the opening of his Megastore in Times Square.

His balloon descent was a characteristic stunt though originally he had hoped to walk a tightrope across Times Square. The megastore is a bold venture, stocked with more than a million CDs,

1,000 listening booths, 21 miles of audio cable and, crucially, 45 tills.

Mr Branson said he was "100 per cent sure" he would succeed in having the suit thrown out. "She is accusing me of doing something at a party at which there were 250 people. My family was there."

Ms Hlinko worked in New York for Virgin Atlantic and was fired, Mr Branson said, because she was no good at her job. Her lawyer approached Virgin with the lawsuit last month but was immediately told there would be no cash deal to settle the claim.

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Kirk counts the cost of clerics on transfer list

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Teachers reconsider strike threat

By ADRIAN LEE

A DISRUPTIVE schoolboy will be taught by outside staff in his present school at a cost of £100 a day in a compromise to try to avert a strike by teachers.

Twenty teachers at Glaisdale School in Bilborough, Nottinghamshire, are threatening to strike from Friday unless a decision to expel Richard Wilding is reimposed. They were considering their position last night after a package of measures designed to avert the strike was announced following a meeting between the boy's parents, the headmaster and the local education authority.

The youth will spend 2½ days a week at the school where he will have two half-day teaching sessions with the head and three with a special needs teacher. He will also have two half-day sessions of home tuition and three sessions a week at a unit for children with emotional and behavioural problems.

The arrangement will be reviewed after a month. The council said the measures meant the school was meeting its legal responsibility to support the 13-year-old. Teachers had been refusing to teach the teenager because of his long record of causing trouble and violence.

Influx of foreign boarders revives fee-paying schools

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

INDEPENDENT schools declared an end to their own recession yesterday as an influx of foreign boarders and a boom in private education for the under-fives produced the first rise in pupils since 1991. About a quarter of boarders now come from overseas.

The annual census by the Independent Schools Information Service, whose members educate 80 per cent of fee-paying pupils, showed the sector's share of the total school population continuing to fall. But strong growth in day pupils led to a 0.6 per cent increase on last year's numbers.

Independent schools registered a rise of 3,000 pupils despite another fall in boarding numbers. Only the recruitment of 9.3 per cent more foreign pupils cushioned the decline in boarding. Hong Kong and other parts of the Far East are the main recruiting grounds but the biggest increase, of almost a third, was in students from elsewhere in Europe.

The 7,392 new pupils from overseas brought the total to more than 20,000. The influx, which will produce some £200 million in foreign currency earnings, meant that the 3.5 per cent drop in overall boarding was the smallest for five years. A third successive increase in the number of day

pupils more than compensated. More girls than boys joined the sector. The pre-school age groups showed the strongest growth, with 7.4 per cent more pupils than in 1995.

The survey showed total pupil numbers in 1995 schools rising to 464,990, almost 8 per cent of the English school population. Although the increase is yet to work through to secondary schools, sixth-form numbers have already recovered. With many overseas pupils coming straight to A-level courses, the 77,600 sixth-formers represented an increase of almost 3 per cent.

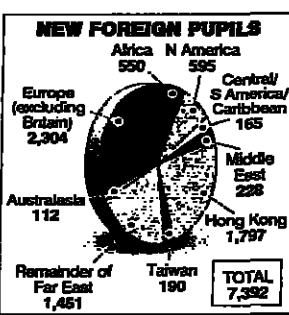
David Woodhead, the director of Isis, said the recovery indicated a return of the "feel-good factor" among parents. "Over the last two years, we have recorded a steady recovery from a long and damaging recession, but lack of confidence was clearly holding many people back from making a commitment to paying school fees. I believe we can now be confident that the recovery is sustained and well-founded."

Mr Woodhead said confidence had also returned to the schools themselves, which invested more than £250 million in new buildings and improvements over the past year. At £551 per pupil, the figure was 10 per cent up on 1995.

Average fee increases came out 0.6 per cent higher than last year at 4.8 per cent. Nick Lewis, the chairman of the Independent Schools Bursars' Association, said the rise was likely to be between 5 and 6 per cent in the coming year.

The number of pupils receiving help with fees also rose to over 28 per cent. More than 132,000 pupils were given some assistance, the bulk of the money coming from trust funds set up by the schools themselves.

Mr Woodhead said the schools would have to find even more money if Labour won the next election and carried out its threat to abolish the Assisted Places Scheme for children from poor families. Roy Chapman, the headmaster of Malvern College, said schools were setting up a "defensive ring" in preparation, either planning smaller intakes or changing their marketing.



Roger Daltrey, left, and Pete Townshend unveil concert details yesterday

Hyde Park's rock of ages

A GIANT rock concert is to be held at Hyde Park in London this summer — scene of legendary free events with the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd over two decades ago.

The expected crowd of 150,000 will pay £8 to see the Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan and Alanis Morissette on Saturday, June 29. The re-formed Who will also perform. *Quadrophonia* at the Master-

Card Masters of Music Concert.

Touted as the biggest rock concert of the year, it is timed for the eve of the final at Wembley of the Euro 96 football championship and is the main event of this year's National Music Festival.

Announcing the plans yesterday, Pete Townshend of the Who said the band's rock opera *Quadrophonia* would

be performed with a cast of 20 against a backdrop of video images, scenery, slides and subtitles. Zak Starkey, son of the former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr, will play with the band.

Roger Daltrey, the Who's singer, admitted he was nervous about the reunion: "It's a bit like looking forward to going to the dentist. It's good once you've done it."

Rebels challenge 'stuffy' horse clubs

By EMMA WILKINS

A CHALLENGE to the British equestrian establishment was mounted yesterday with the launch of a riding group that aims to counteract the sport's "elitist" image.

Sarah Sandland formed UK Riders three months after resigning as director of the British Horse Society's national network of riding clubs.

Miss Sandland, 40, who once worked for the British Showjumping Association, aims to recruit 100,000 members by the year 2000. The society, Britain's largest horse charity which boasts the Queen as its patron, has 65,000 members. "There are an awful lot of people who love riding but have the perception that riding clubs are run by retired army officers and ladies in tweed skirts," Miss Sandland said.

"They may be intimidated because they don't know all the correct riding terms and we are aiming to provide a

relaxed atmosphere for people to enjoy riding as a hobby." The society, which celebrates its 50th anniversary next year, is the umbrella body for the riding establishment. Horse trials, dressage and carriage-driving competitions are overseen by its officials. The society already faces breakaway movements from the horse trials and dressage committees, which want to run their own sports.

Dismissing the allegation of elitism, the society said it represented ordinary riders through its network of 417 riding clubs. "I would strongly counteract the accusation of elitism," Nicola Gregory, a society spokeswoman, said.

"Our members are mostly women and many more than half are earning less than the national average. Of course we have members who have their own land and many horses, but they are a tiny minority."

Charities warned to beware lottery advisers

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MEDICAL and health charities planning to apply for £160 million of National Lottery money have been warned not to pay for advice from "cowboy" consultants offering them a professional grant application service.

Timothy Hornsby, chief executive of the National Lottery Charities Board, said that he had discovered a number of opportunists hoping to make a "quick buck" by advising groups applying for grants.

Some had placed advertisements in local papers claiming that the only way to obtain a lottery grant was to pay for their "professional services". Others were selling booklets promising "surefire success" with applications.

"Some of these pieces of advice are just misleading, some are extremely poor value for money in that they say very much less than we say in the material we publish ourselves. There are developing in this field a fair number of cowboys and you don't always recognise their stonks and spurs," Mr Hornsby said.

One £14.50 leaflet obtained by *The Times* and produced by Ace Publications in Glasgow contained advice already published by the board, retyped on eight sides of A4 paper. The document was full of grammatical and spelling mistakes.

David Sieff, the board's chairman, said that, although he did not think the so-called lottery advisers were breaking the law, they were unfairly taking advantage of smaller charities, which did not have a big infrastructure or many paid advisers of their own.

"Our message to smaller charities is, if you want advice, then ring us," he said.

Mr Sieff was speaking at the launch of the board's third round of lottery grants, which is aimed at groups working in the health and medical sectors. The first two rounds focused on poverty and youth.

"Among those who stand to benefit are groups which tackle the special health problems caused by low income; those providing information and support for people with disabilities; those which help carers by giving them breaks or access to information; and research organisations," he said.

Mr Hornsby denied reports that the board was setting a maximum cap of £500,000 per grant, but emphasised that applicants should be realistic. "Over half the grants were for less than £35,000."

Application packs for the board's latest round of grants are available from May 20. Completed forms must be returned by August 9.

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PERITAS

July 20 1996

Tory MP accuses Mirror reporters of smear story

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A Tory backbencher told the High Court yesterday that a journalist who is now Tony Blair's press secretary conducted a campaign to destroy his reputation.

Rupert Allason said that Alastair Campbell set out to damage him by publishing an article that amounted to a malicious falsehood. Mr Campbell was in charge of a team of "very experienced" political correspondents for the *Daily Mirror* who, Mr Allason said, fabricated a story suggesting that 50 MPs had signed an early day motion [EDM] in the House of Commons challenging him to give the Maxwell pensioners £50,000 — an exaggerated figure — that he had won from the newspaper in libel damages.

Mr Allason, MP for Torbay, who writes spy non-fiction under the pseudonym Nigel West, claims that it was a *Mirror* journalist who drafted the motion, canvassed support for its publication on the Labour back benches and invented the newspaper article. The article, published in

the *Mirror* in November 1992, was "very short but, remarkably, was untrue in almost every respect". Mr Allason, who is conducting his own case, told Mr Justice Drake: "Despite its gravity, this article was wrong in that there was no challenge, certainly no challenge from 50 MPs, and there had not been damages of a quarter of a million pounds."

For a backbencher to be singled out as the subject of personal criticism by so many MPs on the first day of an early day motion was "extraordinary to the point of being unprecedented". The action was designed to cause mischief and heap opprobrium on him, Mr Allason said.

Over a long period, Alastair Campbell has been antagonistic towards Rupert Allason

The libel damages referred to had been exaggerated by £50,000 in the article.

"There was a draft early day motion circulating in the Commons that Thursday evening but it did not come into effect until much later, on Friday morning. Thus the article was wrong in three significant respects."

Indeed the *Mirror* jumped the gun in another very important respect. When the EDM was published the next day, it contained only seven signa-

tures, not the 50 reported by the *Mirror*.

He is suing Mr Campbell, *Mirror* Group Newspapers and another journalist, Andy McSmith, now of *The Observer*, for malicious falsehood, and asking for aggravated damages and an undertaking not to repeat the words.

Mr Campbell, who left his post as political editor of the *Mirror* to become an executive for the now defunct *Today* newspaper before working for Mr Blair, is expected to give evidence in the four-day hearing. Mr Allason told the court

that there had been a long history of animosity towards him by the *Mirror*, dating back to October 1991, when he made a public attack on the late newspaper proprietor Robert Maxwell and the *Mirror*'s foreign news editor, Nicholas Davies. Maxwell issued proceedings against him and attacked him in a front-page story under the headline "Dishonourable men and dirty tricks".

The MP said that evidence of the newspaper's prejudice was contained in a letter signed by Joe Haines, a senior executive and former leader writer on the *Mirror*, in which he said: "Dear Mr Allason, I regard you with the utmost contempt. Rather than apologise to you for your wickedness, I'll see you in Hell first." Maxwell died, Mr Davies was sacked and the MP's counter-claim for libel was settled with a statement in open court. The article at the centre of the dispute was published four days later. Mr Allason complained that he had lost financially. He was negotiating a contract said to be worth \$75,000 to write the history of a New York-based security



Alastair Campbell, left, now Tony Blair's press secretary, led a malicious campaign, claims Rupert Allason

company. The contract fell through.

Mr Allason said: "Mr Campbell was very close to Robert Maxwell, took his death very badly, and over a long period since the original contribution has been antagonistic towards the plaintiff, using his column in the *Mirror* to attack him. The MP also claims malice on the part of top *Mirror* Group management. He said that David Montgomery, the chief executive, had falsely assured him in a letter that an investigation into the allegations had been carried out by a senior director who had concluded there was

no foundation in his complaints. This was obviously intended to fob him off, he said.

The *Mirror* Group says that Mr Allason's complaint was settled at an early stage with a correction and apology. It denies malice and says that the MP suffered no pecuniary

damage. Charles Gray, QC, counsel for the *Mirror*, told Mr Allason he realised that nobody would take any interest in the case "unless you were calling the press secretary to the Leader of the Opposition a liar".

The hearing continues today.

Bupa to reward healthy lifestyle

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

BUPA is to overhaul its business strategy to fend off fierce competition in the private health care market.

Customers will be offered loyalty bonuses to spend on healthy activities such as joining fitness clubs, having medical screening or buying extra policies. Bupa said yesterday that it will also enter the long-term care market.

The company is preempting an imminent announcement by the Department of Health, which is expected to require individuals to insure themselves for the first three years of nursing home bills in return for the State paying their costs afterwards.

Bupa customers will also lose the right to choose any hospital for treatment and will have to select from an approved list of 150. Analysts said this would polarise the country's private hospitals, with the most expensive units moving to cater almost exclusively for the rich and foreigners while others look after the middle and working classes.

Bupa's reforms have been prompted by undercutting of its prices as general insurance companies have entered the health market.

More pets suffering neglect by owners

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

MORE horses and domestic pets are being neglected, often by owners who bought on impulse without being prepared to look after them, the RSPCA said yesterday.

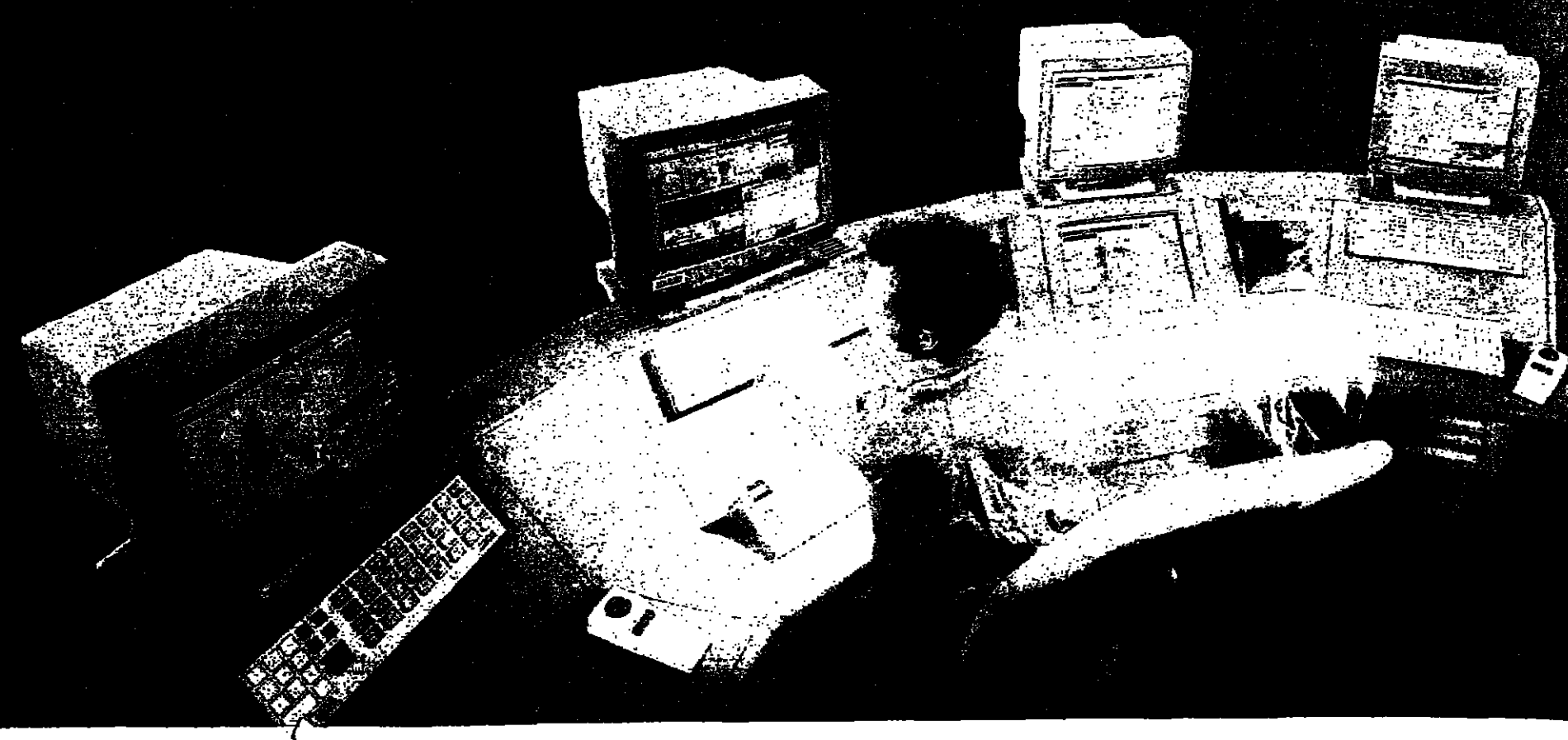
The society also called for a national dog registration and microchipping scheme which would make it easier to trace irresponsible owners.

Cases of neglect rose from 1,541 in 1994 to 1,648 in 1995, and accounted for three quarters of all convictions for cruelty to animals, the RSPCA said in its annual report. However, convictions for acts of cruelty — involving neglect, beating or other physical attacks — dropped from 2,503 in 1994 to 2,201 last year.

Richard Davies, the society's chief inspector, said: "What is depressing is that 75 per cent of these convictions were for completely unnecessary negligence. People are still going out and buying animals on impulse without thinking about the cost, time and commitment required to look after them."

Dogs remain the main victims of cruelty. The symptoms of neglect seen by inspectors included starvation, worm and flea infestation and injuries left untreated.

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Charities warned to beware lottery advisers

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By BILL FROST

The ball with which England scored their victory was snatched up at the end of the game by a West German player. Stung by the humiliation of defeat, Helmut Haller



Herr Haller, who scored West Germany's first goal, kept an eye on the referee at the end of extra time to see when he would blow the whistle. When the game fin-

the ball never again. This makes me sad because it was the greatest souvenir I ever had. Today, nearly 30 years later, I get sometimes requests from England if I would like to give the ball for a donation for a good purpose, a charity auction. Now I would do it, but I don't have the ball."

Geoff Hurst scoring the goal that sealed England's victory. His hat-trick gave him the right to keep the ball

magazine popular among young fans who know little of their national team's real glory days, has launched a campaign urging the German Government to find and return England's treasure. It is urging readers to lobby the German Ambassador.

asked Haller to return the ball when they met at a function years after the 1966 final. "I said he should give it back, but he refused," the veteran recalled.

Sir Bobby Charlton, also a member of the victorious England team, was surprised that the former German striker

had bothered to grab the ball at the end of the game. "Under those circumstances, had we lost, I wouldn't have wanted the bloody thing," he said.

"By tradition it should have gone to Geoff and it is sad that it didn't. Whether possession of the ball would have changed England's fortunes or

international level. I would not like to say. Nevertheless, it would be good if we had kept it.

"There was such excitement when we won that none of us noticed the ball was missing. It was one hell of a day."

Match preview page 52

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

Graham Mackrell, club secretary at Sheffield Wednesday, which like Southampton is sponsored by Sanderson Electronics, said: "The type of people going to football are more affluent. The demographics of the sport are going up all the time ... It is

The Leeds deal means that during the 1996-97 season computer and electronics companies will sponsor 60 per cent of the clubs.



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Unhygienic Princess who needs marching orders

SISTER MONK, the first operating theatre sister I worked under as a houseman, was regarded with the same awe as we viewed Regimental Sergeant-Major Ronald Britain when I was an officer cadet.

No young doctor would have been any more likely to appear in theatre with a forelock poking out from under his surgical cap than a soldier would have dared go on parade with a dirty cap badge, since RSM Britain was reputed to have the loudest voice in the British Army. There was a difference in the two offences, however, for whereas a dirty cap badge demonstrated only an ill-disciplined trooper, straggling hair might drip organisms on to an open wound and would cause immediate problems.

Sister Monk's language, if she had seen the Princess of Wales's hair peeping out from beneath her cap, might well have made Mr Britain blush, for it is unlikely that a theatre sister would have been any more polite to a young royal than were sergeant-majors to their troops. However, as the Princess of Wales presumably didn't touch the patient, or the operating staff, she might not have been sent out of the theatre ignominiously to scrub up and change but might have been left off with a verbal roasting as she was ordered to cover the dangerous locks.

When asepsis — the creation of a bacteria-free environment — replaced an



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttford

antiseptic fine spray in operating theatres, the aim was to achieve an atmosphere from which micro-organisms were excluded. Doctors and nurses in the theatre wear sterile gowns, caps and masks. They scrub their hands just as carefully as a soldier cleans his boots, and put on sterile gloves carefully so that the uncovered hand doesn't touch any part of the glove that will come into contact with patients.

Rings are regarded with particular disfavour by microbiologists. The bugs which

can be grown in the laboratory from the skin beneath a wedding ring would shock those who worry about cleanliness. The value of the surgical mask has been questioned, but research has shown that its effectiveness is undermined only if it is not changed often enough and becomes waterlogged from prolonged breathing or a dripping nose. To be useful the mask must cover the nose and mouth. The affectation of wearing one under, rather than over, the nose defeats its purpose. Anybody who doubts the

number of bacteria and other organisms that treat the hair as their natural habitat should study the distribution of infected acne on a sufferer's face. However often these patients wash their hair, and however well medicated their shampoo, angry spots develop in those places where dust and bugs shed from the hair settle. The spots therefore form along the forehead, below the hairline and on the cheeks. When people don't brush their hair back, it acts like a thatched roof and, just as water drips from its eaves and falls to the ground, so the debris from hair with its organisms falls on the face, or if the person is bending over an operating table, on to the patient.

The boy whose heart operation was observed by the Princess of Wales sat up in hospital yesterday. Arnaud Wambo, 7, who had surgery for a hole in his heart, is making a good recovery at Harefield Hospital, London.

Hans Murmann, who will care for Arnaud until he is well enough for the journey home to Cameroon, praised the Princess for her interest in the boy's welfare. Less kind commentators have accused her of mounting a publicity stunt by attending the operation with a camera crew from Sky Television.

Mr Murmann, 58, said the Princess had a genuine interest in the charity Chain of Hope, which brought Arnaud to Britain for surgery, performed free by Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub.



Arnaud Wambo's surgery was watched by the Princess



Stefanie Powers and her husband outside the High Court yesterday after she received undisclosed damages

Actress accepts payout for Sun libel

By Russell Jenkins

THE American actress Stefanie Powers received an apology in open court yesterday from *The Sun* over a defamatory article that caused her "grave distress".

The star of the long-running ITV series *Hart to Hart* was at the High Court in London to collect more than £70,000 in undisclosed damages and an estimated £30,000 in legal costs agreed in an out-of-court settlement.

The newspaper had wrongly published allegations that she had sexually harassed and assaulted a former male

employee. It was further alleged that she was an alcoholic and had made threats against the employee's life.

George Carman, QC, her counsel, said: "These allegations which were made in the article were entirely without foundation which the defendant now accepts."

Miss Powers had flown into London from her home in Kenya where she is president of the William Holden Wildlife Foundation. She was accompanied by her husband, Patrick de la Chesnais.

Outside court she said she pursued the action because the story had been picked up by newspapers around the world and repeated as fact. She said she was

especially distressed that the defamation should have happened in England where she has a home and has always been treated well by the public and press. Her greatest distress had been that the allegations were read by her husband's family, especially his grandmother.

"These are not things that made it a pleasure to have to go back and try to explain to them," she said. "We are very relieved to have all this behind us. It has been 11 months now. It has been extremely upsetting to all of us, especially to my husband's family." She said the allegations were clearly the work of "an extremely disgruntled human being".

RCN annual congress

Nurses refuse to back boxing ban

By Jeremy Laurance, Health Correspondent

NURSES rejected a ban on boxing yesterday, opening a split within the medical profession. The Royal College of Nursing said that a ban would be an unreasonable infringement of personal liberty, and the best way to protect boxers was to allow the sport to continue with safeguards.

The surprise decision, carried by a large majority at the college's annual congress in Bournemouth, sets nurses apart from doctors whose professional body, the British Medical Association, has called for a ban since 1982. Nurses, debating the issue for

the first time, argued that a ban would do more harm than good by driving the sport underground. The congress was told that boxing has caused 500 deaths among professional and amateur boxers since 1884, when the Queensbury Rules were introduced, and that 15 professional boxers had died since 1945. Medical associations in the United States, Canada, Australia and Scandinavia have opposed boxing and professional boxing has been banned in Sweden since 1969. Mike Hayward, a coronary care nurse in Portsmouth and

a former boxer in the Army, said that to call for a ban would be "self-righteous and sanctimonious". Deaths among professional boxers were "very few" compared with those in rugby, parachuting, diving and motor sport.

"This is a choice entered into by two consenting adults," Mr Hayward said. "Boxing is not safe. However, it is their health and their bodies. How many fat and out-of-condition business executives drop dead on the squash court chasing a little rubber ball around? Should we ban squash?"

Mike Walsh, a nurse in Cumbria, said there had been 15 deaths in the past two years on the Lakeland fells but that was not a reason to ban hill walking. "I'm against boxing but banning it would be a serious mistake. It would drive it underground. If you want to protect the health of boxers, keep it legal."

Brian Kay, a nurse at the high-security Ashworth psychiatric hospital on Merseyside, who has cared for a brain-damaged boxer, urged the college to join the BMA in opposing boxing. "Is it really acceptable in a modern civilised society to promote and idolise one individual for his ability to perpetrate a violent assault upon his fellow?"

Mr Kay, chairman of the Society for Nursing People with a Disability, who proposed the motion, said: "When you consider the obscene rewards paid to encourage some people to engage in this activity, is this really free will? Is it not the most cynical form of exploitation?"

Sue Jones, of the Society of Paediatric Nursing, said: "At the very least the college should lobby for a ban on boxing before the age of consent."

Nurses struck off after committing serious crimes may be permanently barred from resuming their careers. The United Kingdom Central Council on Nursing, the disciplinary body, is considering changing its policy to allow life bans on those convicted of offences such as rape.

Salary body 'like a puppet on a string'

By Jeremy Laurance

NURSES accused their pay review body yesterday of sacrificing its independence to implement the Government's policy on local pay. By a margin of nine to one, members of the college's annual congress condemned the review body for behaving "like a puppet on a string that dances to the Government's tune".

They resisted calls, however, for a withdrawal from the pay-setting mechanism, which has been in place since 1983. The review body, a committee of seven appointed by the Government, was set up to take the heat out of annual pay negotiations.

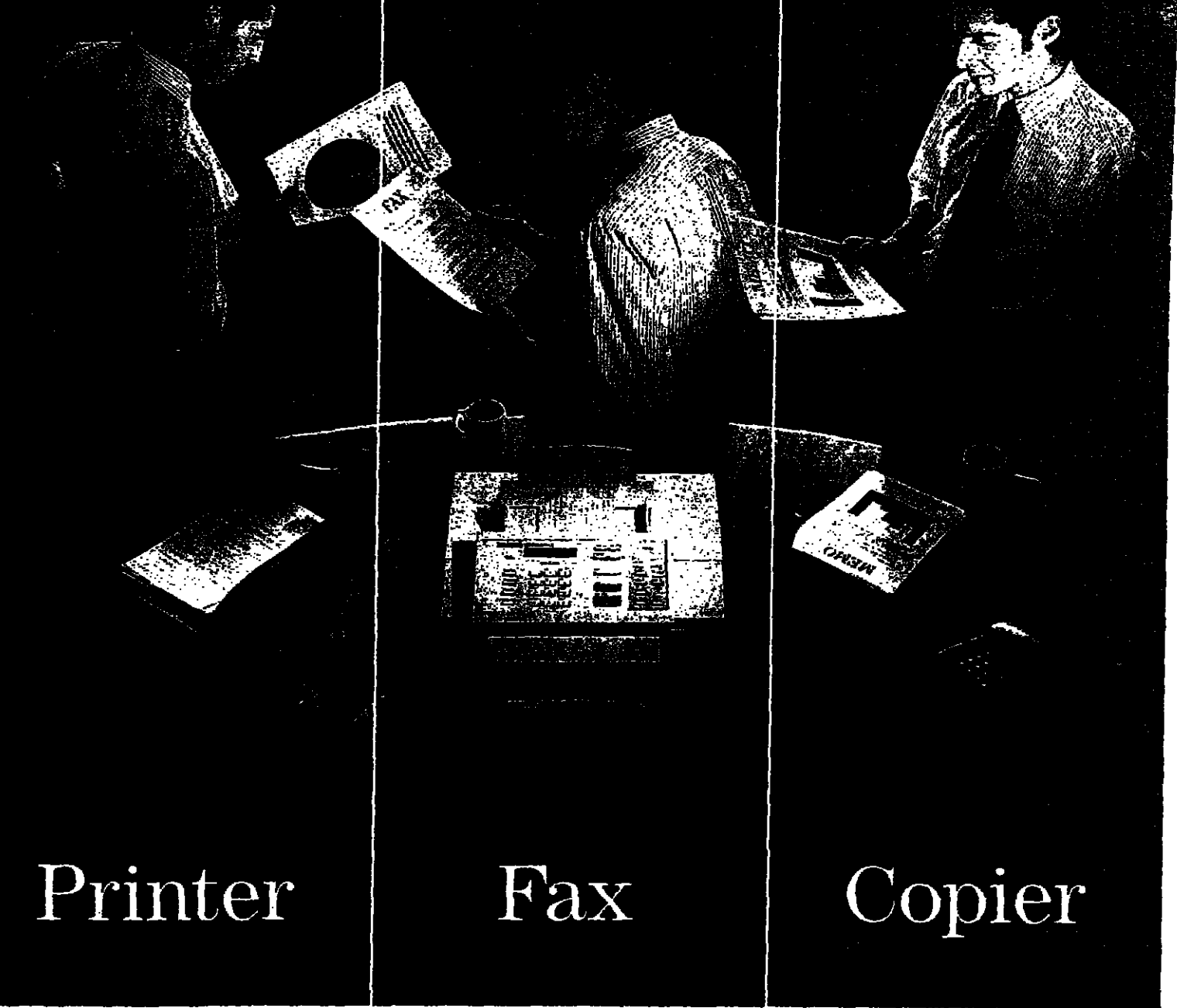
The body was awarded to nurses in return for their commitment not to take industrial action, a commitment that was overturned by the college

in its pay dispute last year. Sylvia Thomas told the congress that the review body had served nurses well for the first 11 years but had failed them in the last two. "It has betrayed our trust. This year's recommendations for a 2 per cent rise with local supplements has set nurse against nurse, doctor against doctor, hospital against hospital."

June Clarke, former president of the college, cautioned against dispensing with what was still the best available system for determining pay. "We fought for it in the 1980s and we should fight for it now — to keep it and change it."

In a speech to health managers in London yesterday, Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, reaffirmed his commitment to local pay.

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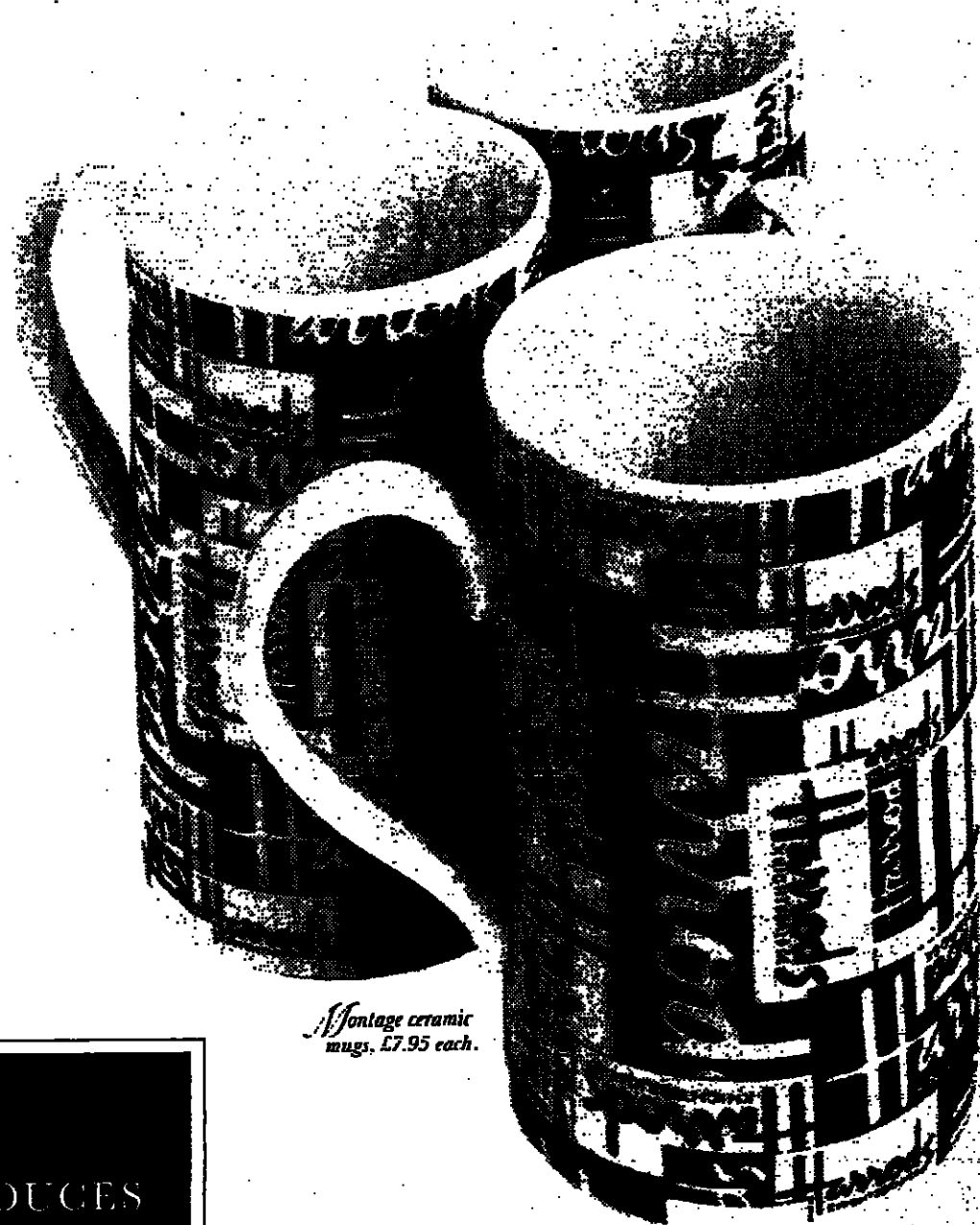
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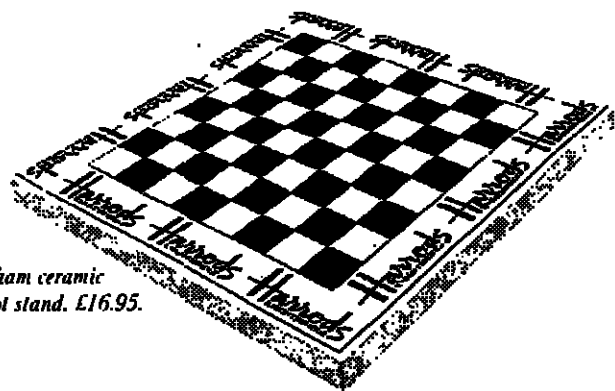
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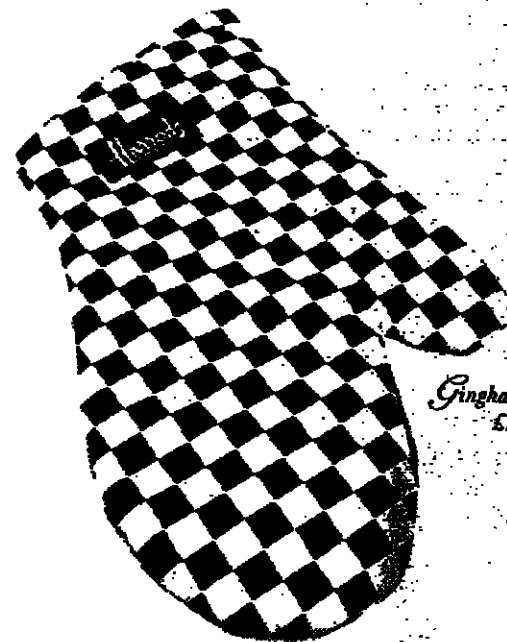
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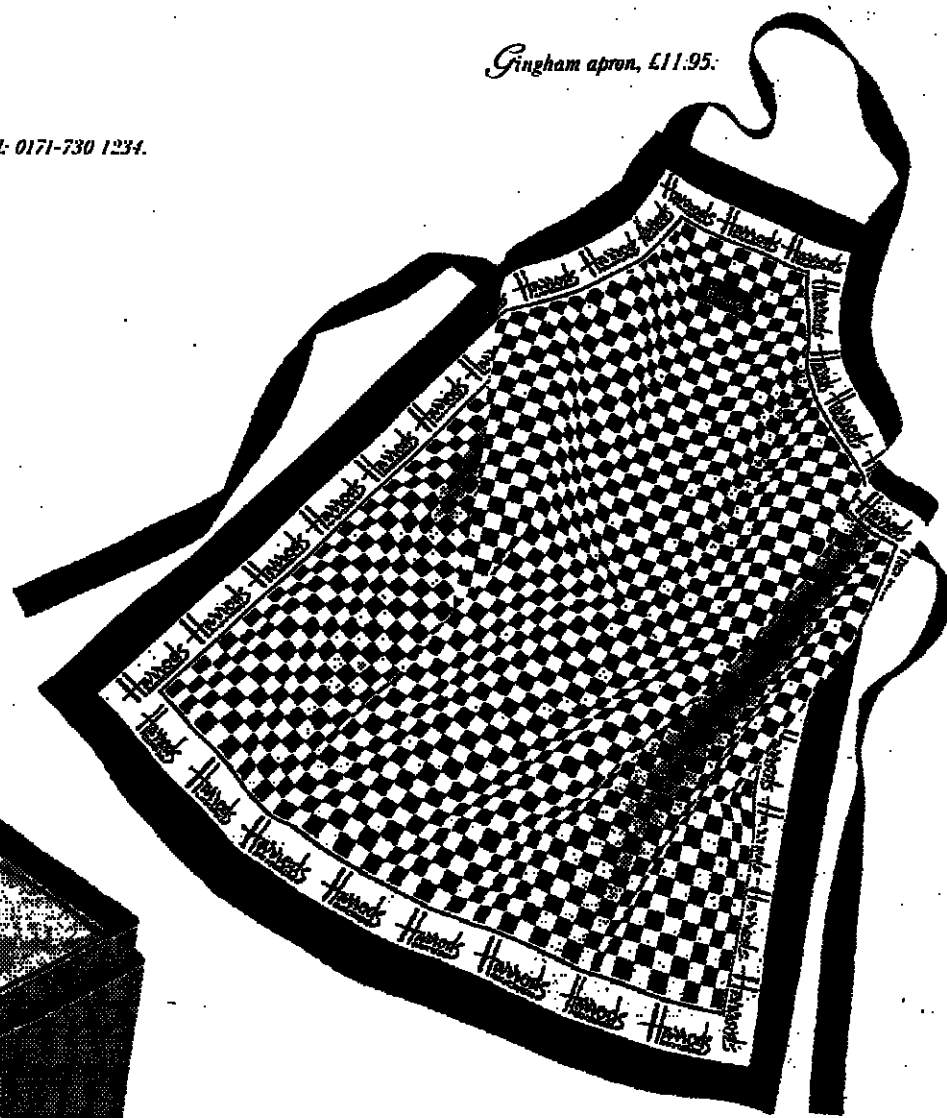
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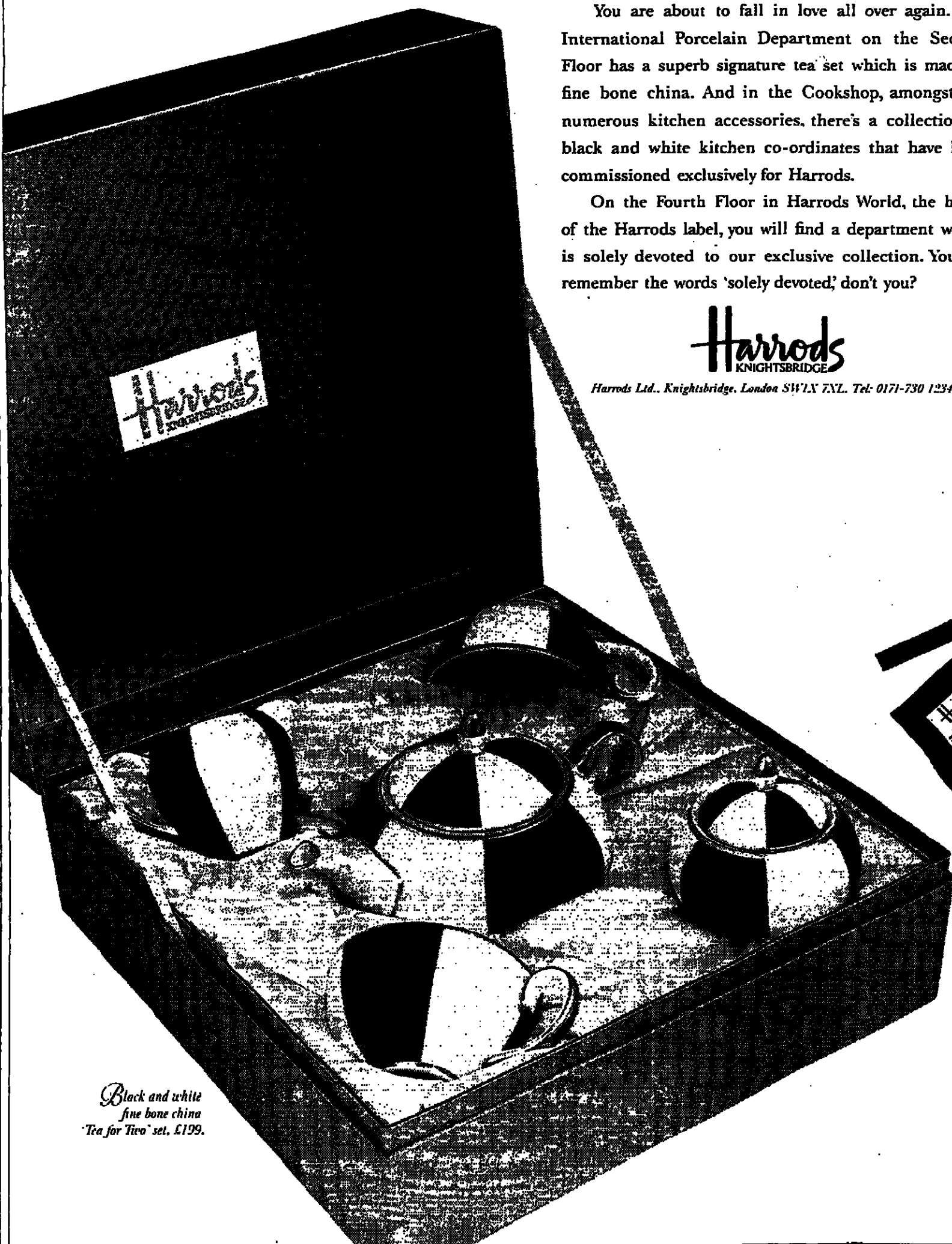
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'I loved my wife. She was beautiful. When I see her I can't believe it is the same woman'

Coma victim's husband tells of family in grief

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE husband of a coma patient in Scotland's first right-to-die case has spoken of his love for his wife and of the strain that the court battle to allow her to die has placed on his family.

A court will decide today on the fate of Janet Johnston, 53, who has been in a persistent vegetative state in Law Hospital, Strathclyde, for four years after taking an overdose. Doctors, supported by her family, have asked the Scottish courts to allow them to stop feeding her, which would lead to her death through dehydration within a fortnight.

A final decision in the case was expected yesterday but an 11th-hour intervention by lawyers representing Mrs Johnston's interests led to a further delay. Lord Cameron of Lochbroom will now give his decision today.

The delay left Mrs Johnston's husband close to tears. "I don't understand. It just adds to the strain," the retired butcher has received distressing letters from people opposed to euthanasia. One said: "If you do not show love and mercy to your wife, you will not receive any love or mercy."

Mr Johnston, of Allanton, Strathclyde, said: "Things are



Peter Johnston has had anti-euthanasia letters

difficult enough without these. Some are supportive but others are not. Whatever happens I want everyone to know I love my wife.

"I just want her to die in peace and with dignity. Thank God Janet will soon be at rest. The hospital staff have done a lot for her. I don't want them to get into trouble if they stop feeding her. I don't want doctors or any of the staff prosecuted or anything like that. That would be wrong."

"That's why it went to the courts in the first place and I don't want to see other people's lives ruined because of this decision. People have got

their own opinions about euthanasia. Some people will say I'm doing the right thing and others won't, but it's the family's decision.

"Janet would have wanted to die. I think she would have done the same for me. We talked about a lot of things when we were younger. We made our own choices."

"There is so much that Janet has missed or doesn't know. She doesn't know what her grandchildren look like, she hasn't cuddled the youngest one. She doesn't know that our son Derek, 24, died three years ago of a brain haemorrhage. I have been in hospital myself. It could be me in there if circumstances had been different. I'm tired of waiting for a verdict. It's been going on for a long time and it's causing pain to the whole family."

"I loved my wife very much. She was beautiful. When I see her now, I can't believe it is the same woman. I don't visit her as often as I should. I just find it too painful."

Mr Johnston, who has been married for 33 years, explained what happened on the day she took the overdose. "The day she was taken ill I had been in hospital for a check-up. When I came back she was fine and I went into the kitchen to make tea. When I came back I discovered that

she had taken a lot of tablets. She had to take a lot of medication for her asthma. I don't know whether it was intentional or an accident. I called the ambulance straight away and she walked to it and seemed fine." His wife became seriously ill at the hospital, however, and slid into the coma from which she has never responded to stimuli.

The case, the first of its kind in Scotland, has taken eight months and has been heard by five of Scotland's most senior judges. They ruled that Lord Cameron could make a final decision in the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

The case will set a precedent in Scotland but will not give doctors freedom to stop treating coma patients who are unlikely to recover. The court has ruled that cases must be considered individually by the Court of Session.

Yesterday Colin McEachern, QC, for the Curator appointed to look after Mrs Johnston's interests, told Lord Cameron: "In a world where the frontiers of medical science are never closed, the Curator suggests the court should prefer that life continues to the certainty of death if treatment is removed." He added that there were people who had been in a coma for months who had recovered.



Janet and Peter Johnston when she was 35. "I want her to die with dignity"

NEWS IN BRIEF

14 years' jail for knife rampage

Darren Rowe, 30, who rampaged through a housing estate slashing bystanders with a knife, was jailed yesterday for 14 years. He claimed he was hunting a gang that had been harassing him.

He left two teenagers and a bus driver scarred. Southwark Crown Court, southeast London, was told. One victim needed 50 stitches. Another's cheek was cut from his ear to his mouth.

Rowe admitted three charges of wounding, carried out near his home in Poplar, east London, within a few minutes. The victims were black but Judge Butler accepted there was no racial motive.

Asylum cases cut

The number of people seeking political asylum in Britain has fallen by more than 20 per cent in the two months since curbs on benefits were introduced to discourage bogus asylum seekers. The move followed a big increase in applications.

Girl in 999 crash

A girl aged 10 is in intensive care after her father's car was in collision with a police car answering a 999 call in Exeter. Karen Randhawa, whose brother and sister were also passengers, suffered head injuries.

Chain reaction

A chain-mail coat worn by a 15th-century sultan of the Mameluke Empire sold for a record £243,500 to an anonymous bidder at Christie's in London yesterday, the highest price yet paid for an item of Islamic armour or weaponry.

MP recovers

Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the SDLP, was released from hospital after fainting at his London home five days ago during a radio phone-in. Mr Mallon, 59, MP for Newry and Armagh, was treated at St Thomas's Hospital.

Nightclub lock-in

An 18-year-old girl was locked in a nightclub for 38 hours after falling asleep in a lavatory cubicle. She was freed by firemen who cut through shutters at the club in Norton, Co Durham, after a boy heard her shouts on Monday night.

Mutant genes blamed for a fifth of ovarian cancers

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

GENETIC defects may be responsible for a fifth of cases of ovarian cancer, the American Association for Cancer Research has been told.

Dr Donald Black, of the Beatson Institute for Cancer Research in Glasgow, told the meeting in Washington DC that gene mutations were likely to prove a more common cause of the disease than previously suspected.

It was believed that 5 to 10 per cent of ovarian cancer cases were attributable to genes, including two original-

ly identified in breast cancer patients, BRCA1 and BRCA2. But new evidence was forcing researchers to think again.

"Genetic susceptibility may be responsible for a far higher frequency of ovarian cancer than we believed," Dr Black said. One problem with assessing the importance of the genes was that they were unpredictable. The same mutant gene may trigger the disease in one woman while sparing her forebears.

Dr Jeffrey A. Boyd, of the University of Pennsylvania, reported an analysis of the BRCA2 gene in 130 women with ovarian cancer. While he

said mutations in that gene appeared to be responsible for at least 5 per cent of ovarian cancers, victims with the gene typically had no clear family history of that malignancy.

When the inborn flaws that triggered ovarian cancer were tracked down "the number may be as high as 20 per cent for all genetic predisposition", he said.

When the genes functioned properly, they produced proteins that prevented cancer. That meant, Dr Black said, that it should be possible for drug companies to produce synthetic molecules with the same function.

Stock answers for a slimmer Britain

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY
SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A TEAM of experts has taken three years to decide that the way to prevent humans becoming fat is to have thinner cows and sheep. People should also consider removing the skin before eating chicken.

The long-awaited report of the Nutrition Task Force, searching for ways to reduce obesity by the next century, suggests leaner livestock, more cooking lessons in schools and a network of "community cafés" providing healthy meals for the poor. It has already produced guidelines for healthier hospital food. Although the team is being disbanded, it will live on in the form of an annual conference on diet and nutrition that the Department of Health has agreed to hold.

The panel of nutritionists, civil servants and representatives from the food

industry was forbidden by the Government from considering whether benefit payments were high enough to afford a healthy diet. Income Support for a child under 11 is about £16 a week.

One of the more concrete proposals in its report is that fat entering the food chain should be reduced by breeding leaner farm animals and feeding them diets to keep them slim.

The Meat and Livestock Commission is using new technology and genetics to reduce the fatness of cattle and sheep without losing the taste of meat. Beef and veal contribute 3.5 per cent of fat in the nation's diet. There have been small reductions in the fatness of cattle and sheep over the past 12 years and these are expected to continue.

Poultry provides 2.7 per cent of the nation's fat but there is little room to make chickens, turkeys, ducks or geese any leaner. They are already bred as a

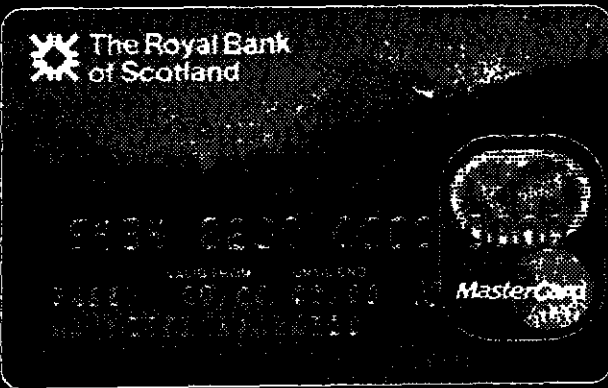
low-fat healthy option with tightly controlled feeding systems.

The panel recommends that customers should be told that most poultry fat is in the skin. The poor have the worst diets and are more likely to die of cancer and other nutrition-related diseases.

Poor families cannot afford to travel to out-of-town supermarkets offering healthier options and have to rely on discount stores and frozen food shops, the panel says. Wholemeal bread, lean meat and fruit are too expensive, even when mothers go without meals so that they can feed their families.

The panel prevented from recommending that giving the poor more money was a solution, suggests they should shop in street markets. The community cafés are proposed alongside "local food partnerships", which involve councils taking healthy products by van to deprived estates.

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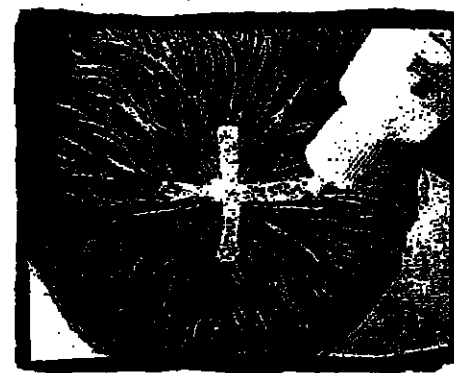
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Brown condemns accountants for spreading tax 'lies'

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

GORDON BROWN accused accountancy firms yesterday of spreading "rumours and lies" about Labour's tax plans.

In a thinly disguised swipe at Clare Short and John Prescott, who have suggested that taxes might rise under Labour, the Shadow Chancellor insisted that he — and only he — would announce the party's plans when the time was right.

Several accountancy firms have held seminars recently advising their clients on how to avoid higher taxes under Labour. Mr Brown told a business conference in London: "In the last few weeks we have seen a flood of idle gossip, uninformed rumour, inaccurate information and Conservative lies about Labour and they have all been made with no access to Labour's budget thinking. People would be better gambling on the Lottery than on the random advice coming from some of these sources."

He said that some of the recent reports suggested that consultants were in the business of avoiding the truth as well as avoiding tax. "If in any other occupation peddling rumour and lies was the basis of advice, the authors would be sacked. Some of them are making money under false pretences and, with some of their advice, selling Britain short."

He had written to one such organisation recently pointing out 12 serious factual errors in a short document prepared for seminars round the country. Yesterday a spokesman for KPMG, a large city accountancy firm that has held about 50 seminars on tax planning for the next election, refused to comment directly on Mr Brown's attack. He pointed out, however, that KPMG had not made forecasts but had

simply outlined hypothetical options. "The advice that we give is standard advice that you would get from any tax planning manual."

As the Tories sought to exploit the growing uncertainty over Labour's tax policies, Mr Brown repeated that he would make all his decisions in the light of economic circumstances. "That is not Labour being vague but Labour being responsible," he said. "It is to reiterate what I have said consistently and repeatedly, that having set our principles and priorities, it is for the Shadow Chancellor to make our tax decisions in the light of all the economic circumstances, and that is the way it will stay."

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, said Labour's reticence simply showed that they had something to hide. "It is becoming increasingly apparent they are going to tax you more. If Mr Brown doesn't like it he has a simple remedy: he should publish the tax plans and be damned."

Labour was trying to create

the impression that it had changed, but all the evidence was stacked against them. "They won't say what their plans are but they are slowly starting to come out as MP after MP and shadow spokesman after shadow spokesman confirms the instincts are to tax more," he said.

"I am grateful to Mr Brown because his outburst this morning simply helps to ensure that Labour's tax plans and tax instincts will continue to be top news week in and week out."

Michael Jack, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, added: "Gordon Brown's extraordinary attack on the accounting profession can mean only one thing: Labour must have something to hide. The shrewd professionals of the accounting world have smoked Labour out. They know what a Labour government would mean — more spending and higher taxes."

□ Labour presented a nightmare image yesterday of Britain under the Tories as a cross between *Gulliver's Travels* and *King Kong*. In the first of two party political broadcasts for next week's council elections, a giant Tory candidate was seen crushing houses and businesses as screaming voters escaped his huge feet.

The black-and-white film depicts Britons living in fear, particularly of job insecurity. At one point, an office worker is seen hiding under her desk as the giant Tory peers through her window.

No politician appears in the broadcast, which is the first in a new genre that owes much to music videos and television advertisements. A voice-over by the actor Charles Dances says: "The Conservative Government has hit us where it hurts. It is time for us to hit them back."



Wealth and power catch 'classless' Britain's eye

By ALICE THOMSON

THE Referendum Party, founded by the billionaire financier Sir James Goldsmith, has bought plutocratic politics back to Britain after six years of John Major's classless society.

The Dorchester Hotel has replaced Downing Street as the new centre of activity. Caviar and champagne rather than Diet Coke and ham sandwiches fuel the political machine, the corridors of power echo to the sound of room service and the air is flavoured with the best Havana rather than cheap cigarettes.

Sir James, who already has

more residences than the Prime Minister, has temporarily ensconced himself in a suite of rooms on Park Lane until the decorators have finished his new town house.

The Dorchester's switchboard is jammed with calls from disaffected Tories, a few Labour MPs and newspaper editors. John Redwood's office is in touch. Baroness Thatcher is a firm admirer as are Lord McAlpine, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare and Alan Clark. Sharply dressed aides hang around the lobby wielding mobile phones and directing a stream of gifts and flowers.

Whereas Conservative Central Office had an overdraft of

£11.5 million last year, Sir James has more than £20 million to spend on the campaign and another £700 million in the coffers.

He already has 30 aides working for his party. More than 2,000 people have applied to be parliamentary candidates. So far 400 have been chosen.

Sir James, 65, has been careful to pace himself. He gave only one interview last year. Early this year he advertised his party's aims in four broadsheet newspapers. This month he began to step up the pressure with a television interview each Sunday.

At first his foray into politics appeared a pastime for a rich man bored with business. But with 23,000 people calling *The Sun* yesterday to pledge their support, it seems that he has caught the imagination of "classless" Britain.

Michael Gove, page 18
Leading article, page 19

It's time to take the Goldsmith threat seriously

The Tory leadership should confront Sir James Goldsmith. The current mix of appeasement and benign neglect is allowing him to flourish and get away with exaggerations and half-truths.

Sir James has struck a popular chord of disenchantment with the European Union. The fisheries and beef rows have provided a focus for this shift, underlined by the anti-British stance taken this week by *The Sun* and the *Daily Express*. The extent of Tory backbench discontent was shown by the 66 Tories who yesterday supported Iain Duncan-Smith's term-limits Bill limiting the powers of the European Court of Justice.

Sir James offers the aura of strong personal leadership, at times almost authoritarian in his disdain for elected MPs, as well as a clear-cut solution, a "who governs Britain?" ballot. But both his political strategy and his underlying argument are mistaken. Of course, there is a case for a referendum. But it is a constitutional absurdity to set up a party which will solely exist to win an election and organise a referendum before dissolving itself. Since this process would presumably take some months, what would its foreign policy be in the meantime? Would it favour higher public spending and taxes? That is ridiculous, and, of course, Sir James's aim is to put pressure on the Tories.

In recent interviews Sir James has argued that the Commons now consists of men of straw since sovereignty has already been passed to Brussels. He dismisses the significance of the British opt-outs on the single chapter and monetary union, as well as the inter-governmental discussions of foreign and home affairs policies. He talks as if the British veto on further integration can be overridden. He is declaring defeat before the battle has begun.

The central flaw in Sir James's case is over the nature of the referendum. He argues that the whole nature of the Community, and now EU, has changed since the 1975 referendum, and what was simply a free-trade area has developed

into a superstate. But the powers of the EU, and the European Court, to which the Tory sceptics object, are inherent in the Treaty of Rome and in Britain's original decision to join, approved by Parliament in 1972. Of course, monetary union would mark a big step towards political union, but the Government has already promised a referendum on that.

The type of questions suggested by Sir James and the sceptics — do you want a Europe of nation states or a European superstate? a single common market or integration? to be governed by Westminster or Brussels? — may express popular feelings but they are imprecise, highly subjective and could not be translated into specific policies. If, say, the vote was in favour of a Europe of nation states, would this mean vetoing all new proposals or would it also involve rolling back existing integration and qualified majority voting? Even the hint of such a referendum might break up the Government. The only valid question is the original 1975 one about whether Britain should remain in or out of the EEC. The answer would almost certainly be the same as then.

The Government has failed to expose the weaknesses in Sir James's position, and his long-standing non-Tory and anti-free-trade views. Instead, ministers sought to conciliate him over the single currency referendum and now hope that his threat will decline if he is ignored. But he is gaining influence, and press support, while disaffected Tories are having a free ride in dallying with Sir James. John Redwood is cleverly positioning himself as a peacemaker and candidate for a post-election leadership contest. But the Tories should treat Sir James as a political and electoral opponent rather than as a well-intentioned, but misguided, ally. He should be fought rather than humoured.

PETER RIDDELL

TOMORROW



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Clinton abortion veto is attacked

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON, named Irish-American of the Year only last month, was under attack from Irish-Americans on two fronts yesterday.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians, America's largest Irish-Catholic group, with 100,000 members, withdrew an invitation to the President to attend its annual meeting in July because he vetoed Republican legislation banning a particularly controversial late-term abortion technique.

A coalition of 11 Irish-American organisations simultaneously released a letter expressing "deep disappointment" at his failure to make US support for companies investing in Northern Ireland conditional on adherence to principles which encourage equal employment opportunities for Catholics and Protestants.

In an unusually strong attack on a head of state last week, the Vatican described "partial birth abortions", in which doctors partially deliver a foetus before crushing its skull, as "an incredibly brutal act of aggression".

On Monday, congressional Republicans invited evidence from Gianna Jessen, 19, who survived her mother's attempt to abort her as a 7-month foetus but has cerebral palsy as a result. "I am the person that she aborted. I lived instead of died," she told a House committee. "I do not consider myself a by-product of conception or a clump of tissue. I was as much a person when I was aborted as I am today."

Ms Jessen was born alive despite a saline injection but the abortionist was not in the clinic at that moment. A nurse sent her to a hospital where she was adopted. She said she forgave her real mother.



Jessen: she survived an attempt to abort her



From the left, the unrestored portrait donated by Mrs Flower; the death mask at Darmstadt; and a computer composite of the portrait donated by Lord Chandos and a 1623 engraving

Computer unmask's Bard's cancer

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

STAND by for an academic rumour: the war of Shakespeare's eye. Neatly timed to coincide with the anniversary of the poet's death, a German researcher has come up with fresh evidence bolstering her case that Shakespeare suffered from a rare form of cancer, lymphoma of the tear gland.

Professor Hildegarde Hammerschmidt-Hummel, of Mainz University, has for years been trying to give Shakespeare back his face. Now, with the help of German detectives and top medical specialists, she has come up with a plausible version and an intriguing explanation for his death. The results will be presented at the German Shakespeare Society's annual conference this week and are sure to trigger controversy in Stratford-Upon-Avon and throughout the world of Shakespearean scholarship.

The starting point is the death mask, now on display in a Darmstadt museum. "I am now 100 per cent certain that the mask is that of Shakespeare," says the professor. British scholars believe it to be a fake.

Professor Hammerschmidt-Hummel, however, argues that the mask — which has 1616, the year of Shakespeare's death, on it — was bought in London in 1775 by a nobleman from Mainz, Count Franz von Kesselstatt. The count brought the mask home. It subsequently disappeared from view, but was later found in an antique shop by a court painter. The mask survived wartime bombardment and was sold by the painter's descendants in 1960 to the Darmstadt authorities.

This week Professor Hammerschmidt-Hummel will present documentary proof that Count Kesselstatt was in London in 1775. German police computers, moreover, have bolstered her case.

There are two acknowledged authentic depictions of Shakespeare: a copper plate engraving in the First Folio of 1623, and a limestone bust in Stratford's Holy Trinity Church. Both were regarded as good likenesses by, among others, Ben Jonson. These serve as the professor's comparative base. Using face-matching and video-splicing techniques normally employed to catch criminals,

German police found five major points of agreement between the Stratford bust and the death mask: this is regarded as a good match.

The computer also found a remarkable 17 points of agreement between the First Folio engraving and two other portraits — one donated by Lord Chandos to the National Portrait Gallery in the mid-19th century, and another given by Mrs Charles Flower to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre picture gallery in Stratford. Police tell me that such a high degree of agreement would be enough to convict a criminal in a court of law, the German academic says.

Professor Hammerschmidt-Hummel argues that the death mask and the Chandos

and Flower portraits were all genuine, and that taken together they represent an accurate picture of the playwright. But she also found a strange swelling in the left eye of the mask and the two portraits. Doctor Wolfgang Lerche, a leading German eye surgeon, confirms that the bulge is a clear indication of Mikulicz's Syndrome. This cancer of the tear duct was relatively common in the 17th century and could have contributed to Shakespeare's death at the age of 52. There are competing versions about the Bard's death, the most popular being that he keeled over after a drinking bout.

The professor's speech to the Shakespeare Society this week will add yet another medical

dimension: the discovery of a lump above the left eyebrow, visible in both the restored version of the Flower portrait and the death mask. Professor Jost Metz, a top German dermatologist, has been consulted and has established that it must have been a three-centimetre swelling indicative of chronic inflammation. Doctors disagree on the significance of that bulge. Some say it may be associated with the cancerous Mikulicz's Syndrome, others believe it might have been a bone tumour.

There is already a hint in Macbeth of the impending controversy: "Your face, my thane, is as a book where men May read strange matters."

Leading article, page 19



The German professor with the death mask

Ukrainian says 'voice told him to kill 52'

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN KIEV

A FORESTER has admitted killing 52 people across Ukraine, claiming he was following an "inner voice". Investigators said yesterday.

Anatoli Onoprienko, 36, was arrested last week on suspicion of the murders, which have shaken Ukrainians in recent months. About 42 of the killings were committed in the past four months, and in most cases entire families were killed. Ten of the victims were children.

An intensive investigation is under way, involving law enforcement bodies from across the country, a leading investigator in the case said.

"He talks about that 'inner voice', but then why did he also steal valuable goods from his victim?", the investigator, who spoke on terms of anonymity, asked.

Mr Onoprienko, in custody in a prison in Lvov, western Ukraine, is undergoing a psychological examination. He was arrested in a village near the Polish border on April 14 after a 3½-month manhunt. Police discovered clothes, televisions and car keys from the victims' houses, as well as other evidence from the scenes of the crimes.

Aleksandr Yevashchenko, a senior investigator with Ukraine's Interior Ministry, said Mr Onoprienko admitted immediately to eight murders committed from 1989 to 1995, but initially denied the other killings. The suspect has not registered an official residence since 1988. He was deported from Austria in 1992 for not having a passport, and again from Germany last year. Ukraine has turned to Interpol for help in the investigation.

Puffy eyes are the clue

By Dr Thomas Stuttaford

SHAKESPEARE'S death mask does show features which could be compatible with a diagnosis of Mikulicz's Disease, sometimes known as Mikulicz's Syndrome.

Johannes von Mikulicz-Radecki, Professor of Surgery at Breslau University in the last quarter of the 19th century, described a chronic inflammatory condition of the tear glands and the parotid glands.

The parotid glands are the salivary glands which swell in mumps.

Mikulicz's Disease of the tear glands makes the eyes puffy and the lids appear half-closed. The illness is usually more of a nuisance than a disaster. It might be more accurate to say that when Shakespeare died, he was suffering from this disease rather than died from it.

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Energetic Yeltsin makes comeback in opinion polls

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

FOR the first time since campaigning began in Russia's presidential elections, President Yeltsin has surged to the lead in opinion polls, overtaking Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader.

In a dramatic comeback for a man whose political future had been written off by many analysts because of his unpopularity and ill health, Mr Yeltsin, 65, polled nearly one percentage point higher than his main rival.

The poll, conducted by the Institute for Social Comparative Research for the *Moscow Times* and CNN, showed that President Yeltsin was supported by 20.7 per cent of the 1,201 respondents questioned in cities and rural areas across Russia. Mr Zyuganov came a close second with 19.8 per cent. While the Communist leader's rating was virtually unchanged from an identical poll in March, the new figures showed Mr Yeltsin boosting

his support by nearly seven percentage points. Other pollsters preparing new figures for release this month, confirmed that their results would show a similar trend.

The two front-runners were still far ahead of the other presidential hopefuls: Grigori Yavlinsky, the leader of the liberal Yabloko party, came in a distant third with 6.5 per cent, followed by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist firebrand with 4.8 per cent; then General Aleksandr Lebed, the former paratroop commander with 4.7 per cent; followed by Svyatoslav Fyodorov, the eye surgeon, with 3.2 per cent; and finally Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader, with just below 1 per cent.

The figures indicated that none of the candidates would be able to secure the 50 per cent needed to win outright in the June 16 poll and that a runoff round between President

Yeltsin and Mr Zyuganov would have to be held in July.

Vladimir Andreyev, director of the research institute, attributed President Yeltsin's surge to a fall in the number of undecided voters. "Zyuganov is stable. He has probably consolidated all his supporters and has little in reserve," the pollster said. "But if Yeltsin does not make any big mistakes, he will continue to earn votes."

Although the Kremlin leader was still recuperating from a heart attack only four months ago, he has stunned observers by launching an energetic and well-planned campaign. He has managed to persuade voters, through a sympathetic media, that they have only two choices, which has virtually eliminated any serious challenge from a third candidate.

Using the vast resources of his office, Mr Yeltsin has also gone on a spending spree,



Russian border guards stand amid the ruins of a fort which was blown up last year in an attempt to relieve tension on the border with China.

paying back wages to workers and promising huge government funding for everything from pensions to ailing factories and bankrupt farmers. He has also made a big effort to boost his public image. For two years he has been widely derided as reclusive and often drunken, manipulated by aides and unable to run the country. But he has given up heavy drinking bouts, gone on

exhausting campaign trips and brought popular members of his family, like his wife, Naina, into the limelight.

Last weekend he sought to boost his role as a statesman when he hosted the summit of the Group of Seven main industrialised countries, whose leaders tacitly endorsed his re-election bid.

Analysts now believe that only two issues could seriously

dent his chances. The first is his heart condition. The other is the war in Chechnya, which he had hoped would calm down after his peace initiative last month. However, fighting has escalated and yesterday gunmen shot and injured Badruddi Dzhamalkhanov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Moscow-installed Government, in an assassination attempt in the capital, Grozny.

Big brother Peking brushes red carpet for humbled visitor

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

PRESIDENT Yeltsin arrives in China today to sign border agreements, define bilateral ties, sell some weapons, and he tactfully reminded that Peking, by retaining the power of the Communist Party, has kept China whole and powerful.

It is one of the ironies of international relations that Russia — or the former Soviet Union — once regarded in China as the advanced "elder brother" is now in economic and military eclipse and may be on the verge of re-establishing its Communist structure.

It is a further irony that, whereas China was once used as a card by Washington in its decades-long manoeuvring against the Russians, now Mr Yeltsin, who has just concluded several hours of talks in Moscow with President Clinton, has become a bargaining chip between Peking and Washington.

Sino-Russian specialists in Moscow and Peking speak openly of joint pressure on the Americans. Mr Yeltsin made the most of this on the eve of his departure from Moscow. "Between Russia and China there are no problems of a political nature," he said. Mr

Yeltsin foresaw a "Russian-Chinese partnership in the next century".

While both countries agree that America's global "hegemony" is undesirable, there will be neither real friendship nor an alliance. Although the Chinese once referred to Mr Yeltsin as a "son", and now praise him for his eagerness to settle border questions which have hung over the two countries for two centuries, they will dislike his statement in Moscow on Monday — in the wake of his talks with Mr Clinton — linking economics and democracy.

The Sino-Soviet alliance of the 1950s is dead — and vanished too is the rivalry which disturbed the long border between the Communist giants from the 1960s until Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Peking in 1989, just before the Tiananmen Square massacre.

During his three-day visit, Mr Yeltsin and three leaders from former Soviet states, Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Kazakhstan, will sign agreements with the Chinese that the five countries will not attack each other. All have a common interest in combating Muslim fundamentalism.

Fire hits Chernobyl zone

Tovsty Lis: Fire engulfed at least five villages within an exclusion zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power station yesterday during an annual visit to their abandoned homes by evacuated residents.

Firefighters were unable to establish the cause of the fire, which broke out during this year's first spell of warm weather. They said the flames,

smoke and dust had sent radiation readings soaring in the heavily contaminated 18-mile zone round the plant.

Some of the 300 villagers who had come to see their deserted apartments and tend graves in Tovsty Lis broke down hysterically as flames consumed entire apartment buildings and raced through fields and woods. (Reuters)

When we rescued him we found something even more disturbing. A fat cat.

Not the kind of thing you'd think the RSPCA would usually have much reason to worry about.

The difference was this particular fat cat drove a Rolls Royce, lived in a detached house and was the owner of

Duke, a disease-ridden and desperately underweight Great Dane.

Locked in a small concrete outhouse, Duke was covered from head to tail in skin diseases and was two stone underweight when rescued.

He was barely able to walk and had to be carried outside by our inspector.

According to the vet, he had been suffering for at least four months.

According to his owner, he had been fed "at least three times a day".

It's tempting to think that animals are only neglected



a cancerous growth the size of a football under its eye. The owner thought it would just sort itself out.

Clearly, money was not a problem for Duke's owner. (He paid his £1,573 fine on the spot and in cash.)

The RSPCA isn't so lucky. We receive no funding from the government and have to rely on your generosity.

In fact, it's only thanks to you we can afford to rescue animals like Duke.

Please give what you can and help us fight not just cruelty, but ignorance.

by people who cannot afford to care for them properly. And although poverty is not an excuse, it is often a reason for animals' suffering. (It costs about £700 a year to look after a normal, healthy dog.)

But the fact is that animal neglect happens across all walks of life.

It's not money that's in short supply, it's knowledge. The owner of a dog that could barely stand through starvation said she didn't think that it needed medical attention.


One German Shepherd had

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Italy's Centre Left starts wooing coalition allies

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ROMANO PRODI, the leader of Italy's Centre Left, began manoeuvring yesterday to form a government after his election victory, by putting out feelers to both the Communist Refoundation party and the separatist Northern League. Either could give his Olive Tree bloc the extra seats it needs for a secure parliamentary majority.

However, he rejected Communist demands for an index-linked incomes policy, saying that it was a "self-destructive instrument".

The Olive Tree gained 284 seats in the 630-seat lower house, but needs 316 for a clear majority. Signor Prodi said he hoped to rule for five years to give Italy stability, though it would "not be easy".

The unexpected election result, he said, should enable Italy to avoid unstable coalitions and "reversals" of the kind that brought down the short-lived centre-right Government led by Silvio

Berlusconi in 1994. Signor Prodi said his priorities included early re-entry of the lira into the European Monetary System, which it left, with sterling, in 1992.

Lamberto Dini, the former banker and caretaker Prime Minister who governed after the fall of Signor Berlusconi, was welcome to join the new administration. "If he wants the Foreign Ministry, there will be no problem," Signor Prodi said.

The Communist Refoundation, led by Fausto Bertinotti, was yesterday in a triumphant mood after winning 35 seats. Signor Bertinotti, an articulate headline Marxist who speaks with a lisp, which is seen in Italy as an aristocratic affectation, was photographed uncorking champagne.

He demanded "shock therapy" to reduce working hours, state-funded socially useful work projects in the depressed South, and an incomes policy linked to the cost of living. He

said the Centre Right would have won if it had not been for the Refoundation's agreement not to contest seats where the Olive Tree might win.

However, Signor Prodi said an incomes policy, abolished three years ago, would "undermine international confidence" in the new Italy. Cesare Romiti, the chairman of Fiat, which with the rest of big business has welcomed the Prodi victory, said an incomes policy would mark "a return to the Middle Ages".

To show that he could bypass the hard Left, Signor Prodi asked Massimo D'Alema, the leader of the Party of the Democratic Left, the former Communist, to open talks with the Northern League, led by Umberto Bossi. The League confounded critics by winning 59 lower-house seats in the North, where it aims to create a separate state.

Massimo Cacciari, the left-wing Mayor of Venice, said voters had rewarded Signor

Bossi's courage in leaving the centre-right bloc and "going it alone". However, it was difficult to see how the Centre Left could find a federalist formula that would satisfy Signor Bossi, even if Signor Prodi firmed up his hints that Irene Pivetti, the League's deputy leader, might remain Speaker of the lower house.

On the Right, recriminations began as Gianfranco Fini, leader of the "post-Fascist" Alleanza Nazionale, rebutted allegations that fear of a Fascist resurgence had alienated voters. He said the Right had underestimated the appeal of the Northern League.

Signor Berlusconi denied that he would leave politics, saying he was a "sentinel of freedom", and rejected accusations that voters had found him an unconvincing candidate for Prime Minister in view of his trial for alleged bribery of tax officials auditing his huge business empire.

Opening of new doors shuts out concierge

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE Parisian concierge, that crucial figure in French mythology combining the roles of caretaker, moral guardian and local spy, is gradually disappearing from the city's doorsteps, a victim of new technology and pressure for housing space.

In 1950 Paris contained 60,000 concierges, or *gardiennes* as they prefer to be called, sharp-eyed curtain-twitchers who carefully monitored the comings and goings in almost every Paris apartment block. But their number has halved, as landlords shift to electronic door-opening codes and let out the ground floor flats where the concierge once lurked behind a wall of moral rectitude.

The plight of the concierges was brought home this week by the case of Madeleine Mauguineau, 73, a widow threatened with eviction from the flat she has occupied for nearly four decades. The owners of her building in the 20th arrondissement point out that she is still living there rent-free, even though she retired in 1992 when her door-answering duties were replaced by an intercom system. Residents of the building have mounted a petition against her eviction, but the elderly *gardiennne* has been told she must be out by May 13.

Mme Mauguineau's fate after such long and loyal service has prompted a public outcry, even though the relationship between Paris and its concierges has always been ambivalent, at best. The concierge answers the door, delivers the post and ensures that unknown or unkempt persons do not enter the building. She (or, in a small percentage of cases, he) keeps communal areas clean, takes deliveries and makes sure the rubbish is collected.

On the other hand, as the nickname *cloportes* (woodlice) suggests, they also have a time-honoured reputation as gossip-mongering agents in league with the state, responsible for chasing the rent and clamping down on lax behaviour.



The concierge, for years the eyes, ears and morals of Paris, is fast disappearing

Several victims of Madame la Guillotine had Madame la Concierge to thank for reporting them to the Revolutionary authorities. After the Occupation many *gardiennes* were accused of aiding the Gestapo, although there are other well-documented cases of concierges who risked their lives to hide fleeing Jews in the cellars.

Coming to Paris from New York, where most doormen regard extracting the maximum possible Christmas tip as their primary function, discovering life under the iron rule of a concierge has been a strange experience, both comforting and oddly intrusive. My own concierge, Mme Fernandez, is a tiny Spanish

woman, like nearly 70 per cent of *gardiennes*, with eyes that can apparently see through walls and a talent for the stealthy approach that would do credit to an SAS soldier.

Not since leaving Cambridge University, where April "the cruellest bedder" took it upon herself to act as my moral conscience, have I experienced such close daily scrutiny from someone to whom I am not directly related. Mme Fernandez tends to materialise out of the carpet in the lobby every morning with such remarks as "Good dinner party? Lots of bottles I see." Or "A letter from your mother this morning." Or, even more disconcertingly since she speaks not a word of English: "Still writing about mad cows, then?"

But she is also a mine of local information, deeply committed to "her" tenants. When our removal van arrived several months ago and successfully blocked the entire street for over an hour, Mme Fernandez stood guard like a small Spanish rottweiler, starting down, in turn, irate motorists, neighbouring shopkeepers and the police. Discussing the situation of Madeleine Mauguineau, the soon-to-be-homeless concierge, Mme Fernandez is sanguine and typically blunt. "What would you do without me to look after you?"



Mobutu: likely to be received at Elysée

Chirac in storm over Mobutu visit

BY BEN MACINTYRE

PRESIDENT Chirac was embroiled in another human rights controversy yesterday over a visit to France by Mobutu Sese Seko, the Zairean strongman repeatedly condemned by the international community for failing to initiate democratic reform.

Two weeks after a controversial visit by Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister, Lib-

eration reported that President Mobutu was expected to meet M Chirac at the Elysée Palace today. Such a meeting would be seen as another sign of support for "regimes whose respect for human rights is hardly a shining example", the newspaper noted.

The French Foreign Ministry would say only that President Mobutu's visit was "private", while conceding that the Zairean leader might

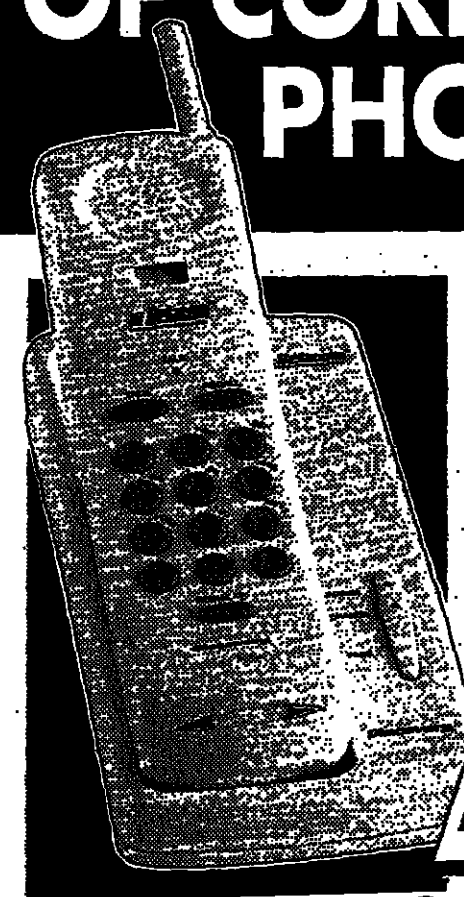
discuss the refugee situation on the Rwanda-Zaire border with French officials.

The spokesman refused to comment on whether the French President would meet his Zairean counterpart in person.

"The secrecy of this visit demonstrates how far Chirac himself is aware of its unacceptable character," Henri Leclerc, of the League of Human Rights, said.

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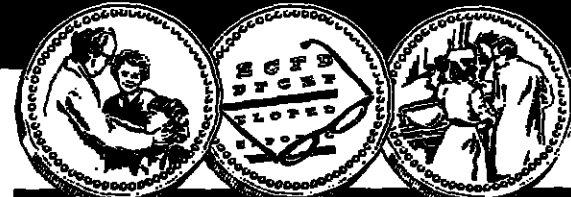
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Assad snub jeopardises peace effort by America

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM AND MARK HUBAND IN CAIRO

IN A diplomatic snub that has cast a shadow over efforts to end the fighting across Israel's northern border, President Assad yesterday refused to meet Warren Christopher on his arrival in Damascus with an American peace plan.

An embarrassed State Department official said that when the Secretary of State returned from Jerusalem with Israeli reactions to the single-page peace blueprint for a meeting with the Syrian leader, regarded as a key player in any negotiated ceasefire, he was told by Farouk al-Shara, the Foreign Minister, that Mr Assad was "not available".

The snub came after reports of friction between the American and Syrian diplomatic teams and anger from Yevgeny Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, who returned to Moscow claiming that the Americans were attempting to freeze out all other international initiatives aimed at halting Operation Grapes of Wrath, the military offensive inside Lebanon.

DIPLOMACY

There was speculation among Western diplomats that Mr Assad, a notoriously inscrutable leader renowned for his tough negotiating methods, may have been showing displeasure at Washington's perceived closeness to the Israeli position. This has been graphically illustrated in Israel, where many Israelis are flying the American Stars and Stripes alongside Israeli flags to mark today's 48th anniversary of the foundation of the Jewish state.

According to Nicholas Burns, a State Department spokesman, Mr Christopher — already looking weary after his four days of intensive shuttle diplomacy — was travelling from Damascus airport with the Syrian Foreign Minister when he was informed that the crucial scheduled meeting with Mr Assad had been scrapped. Mr Christopher remained for only two and a half hours in Syria



Mr Peres, surrounded by security officers, one videotaping crowds, arrives for a Memorial Day service at a Jerusalem cemetery yesterday

before returning to Jerusalem, where he had earlier held two meetings with Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister.

American peace efforts suffered another blow last night when two Egyptian Islamic groups announced in Cairo that they would start to kidnap Americans in Egypt and would bomb and sabotage American and Israeli interests around the world. President Assad's ascendancy has over-

shadowed the influence of Egypt, the key American ally in the Middle East peace process. Fallout from the Israeli raids has been felt directly in the activities of militant Egyptian Islamic groups, whose long-standing opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian deal has gained ground with every Israeli shell fired into Lebanon.

Israeli diplomats in Arab states which have Israeli dip-

lomatic delegations — Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt — have privately acknowledged that the death toll among Lebanese civilians has forced a wedge between the populations of "friendly" Arab states and Israel.

As the diplomatic moves foundered, both Israel and Hezbollah kept up their offensives yesterday, a day of high emotion in Israel as sirens marked a two-minute

silence for the 18,211 citizens who have fallen so far in the wars fought against the Arabs since 1948. Some Katyushas thudded into the beleaguered and almost deserted Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona, damaging a factory.

In Washington, it was confirmed last night that the Clinton Administration would discuss ways to improve Israeli defences against missile attacks when Mr Peres arrives

for a three-day visit on Sunday.

□ Geneva: The UN Human Rights Commission condemned Israeli attacks, by adopting a resolution backed by Britain and other European Union states. Fifty countries, including Russia, voted for the resolution, which censured repeated Israeli aggression in Lebanon.

Simon Jenkins, page 18

Israel warned to guard its identity

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

THE latest edition of the popular magazine *Jerusalem Report*, published to coincide with the celebration today of the 48th anniversary of Israel's independence, depicts Theodor Herzl, the father of modern Zionism, dialling on his mobile telephone from the balcony of a skyscraper.

The cover encapsulates the changes in lifestyle which have affected the Jewish state since its foundation under David Ben-Gurion in 1948, and its transformation from a would-be home of socialist egalitarianism to the brash centre of free-market capitalism in the Middle East.

Dress is no longer typified by open shirts and sandals.

LIFESTYLE

while the kibbutz is a founding and debt-ridden institution. Israelis are among the world's top per-capita users of home computers and of mobile phones. With around 600,000 subscribers, or 12 per cent of the population, rules have been introduced banning their use in the army and in synagogues.

"Israelis have an insatiable appetite for new things," said David Tamir, a Tel Aviv advertising executive. "And they have always been open to technical innovations."

So rapid has been the change that President Weizman — whose uncle, Chaim, was the first President

of a state then renowned for its austerity — has recently issued a warning that the so-called "Americanisation" of Israel could affect its national identity. He advised Israelis to "beware of McDonald's and Michael Jackson".

Within the past year branches of such American brand leaders as Blockbuster Video, Tower Records, Ben and Jerry Ice Cream and even a non-kosher McDonald's have opened within a 500-yard radius of The Times Jerusalem bureau. A little further away the area around Holy Trinity Orthodox Russian Church contains at least 20 cafes, nightclubs and restaurants where the music throbs late into the night, even on the Jewish Sabbath when

previously all but a handful of restaurants were shut.

One of the main reasons for the transformation is that Israel is today among the world's rich nations. The per capita income is £10,250 a year, just below that of Britain and ahead of Spain's. Comparisons have been made with Asian "Tiger" economies like Taiwan and, despite regional tensions, there are now more hi-tech companies from Israel quoted on Wall Street than from any other foreign country except Canada.

About 40 per cent of adult Israelis now holiday abroad every year, and humous and pitta bread are giving way to fettucini washed down with a glass of more than passable Golan chardonnay.

General killed in gunfight with hotel terror suspects

FROM LAURI NEFF IN CAIRO

EGYPT

SEVEN people died yesterday in a shootout between police and two men suspected of last week's massacre of Greek tourists near Cairo. A search for two other suspects is continuing.

The Egyptian Interior Ministry said two Islamic militants and five policemen, including a general and two other senior officers, were killed in the shooting as police approached a hideout in southern Egypt.

Seventeen Greek tourists and an Egyptian parking attendant died when four gun-

men opened fire on them at the Europa Hotel, near the Great Pyramid of Giza, last Thursday. The Muslim militant group, Gamaa al-Islamiya, claimed responsibility for the raid. In a statement, the group said the intended targets of the raid had been Israeli tourists, and it was to avenge Israel's bombardment of Lebanon.

The extremists claimed Egyptian security officials had switched a group of Israelis with the Greek pilgrims at the last minute.

The government-owned Al-

Akram newspaper this week reported that Egyptian security forces had rounded up 1,500 suspects since the attack and had come up with a detailed description of the attackers.

Hassan al-Alfi, the Interior Minister, last night demoted the head of the tourist police and the chief of security in Giza. He also ordered an internal review of 13 policemen who were supposed to have safeguarded the area around the Europa Hotel. There are unconfirmed reports that only one of the policemen had shown up for work on the day of the massacre.

Tyson told to avoid strip clubs

New York: Probation officers have ordered the heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson to lead a clean life (Quentin Letts writes). He has been told to stay away from bars and nightclubs — particularly of the strip joint variety.

The order follows an alleged incident this month in a Chicago disco called the Clique, where a woman claimed to have had her cheek chewed by Mr Tyson.

He has denied the claim, but the allegation evidently worried officers in charge of his probation for a 1992 rape conviction.

Unmanned US spy plane crashes

Los Angeles: A prototype of America's latest unmanned spy plane has crashed on take-off at California's Edwards air force base, raising doubts about stringent cost-cutting in the Pentagon's research and development programmes (Giles Whittell writes). The futuristic flying wing carrying a saucer-shaped body was one of a handful of "Darkstar" drones designed to provide high-altitude reconnaissance.

British threat on landmines

London: Britain intends to replace some of its standard anti-personnel landmines with a new generation of "smart" weapons, unless a global ban on the manufacture and use of all mines is agreed (Michael Evans writes). Labour denounced the announcement, made in the Commons, as "a dangerous sham and empty rhetoric".

46 Kurds killed in Turkish clash

Diyarbakir: At least 46 Kurdish guerrillas and five Turkish soldiers have been killed in a clash in eastern Turkey. Troops, supported by aircraft, have been pursuing a three-week offensive in the area. In a separate incident, rebels killed three teachers in an attack on their homes. (AP)

Clinton cards hits luc

WASHINGTON: President Clinton is expected to announce a new initiative to help the poor, including a plan to create 100,000 new jobs in the private sector. The plan is part of a broader effort to reduce the federal deficit and stimulate economic growth. Clinton is also expected to announce a new initiative to help the environment, including a plan to create 100,000 new jobs in the private sector. The plan is part of a broader effort to reduce the federal deficit and stimulate economic growth.



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THE NEW AU

Clinton plays his cards right and hits lucky streak

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

IT TOOK President Clinton ten hours to fly 5,180 miles home from Moscow on Sunday night, but he did not exactly devote that time to pressing affairs of state.

The world's most powerful man spent virtually the entire flight playing cards with Leon Panetta, his Chief of Staff, and other White House aides. He was so engrossed in the game that he remained on Air Force One several minutes after it finally landed at Andrews air force base.

Mr Clinton does not do things by halves. He eats voraciously, plays golf obsessively, and usually has two or three books on the go at once. His appetite for politics is insatiable. So, his foes contend, is his appetite for women, but cards are his other great passion.

He played cards endlessly in New Hampshire during the dark days of January and February 1992, when his presidential campaign seemed

doomed by charges of adultery and draft evasion. Later, when the campaign was fizzling, he would arrive at hotels in the small hours of the morning and drag exhausted aides into card games to unwind.

He played cards with the Cores on their campaign bus. He played cards relentlessly during that final 30-hour non-stop campaign trip across America when his voice gave out, and he continued playing for relaxation after reaching the Oval Office. Newsweek reporters who spent a week at the White House said the President "seemed most in his element when he was watching two televisions, conducting three conversations, playing cards and eating — all at once".

Last November Mr Clinton's obsession with cards actually contributed to the Government's shutdown. Newt Gingrich refused a budgetary compromise with Mr

Clinton because, he complained, the President had snubbed him during the long flight back from the funeral of the assassinated Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. It turned out that Mr Clinton had spent much of the flight playing cards with the publisher of the New York Daily News.

Mr Clinton does not play bridge — Eisenhower was America's first and only White House bridge enthusiast. He sometimes plays pinochle with Chelsea in the evening, but his favourite game is Hearts, at which he is an expert.

"I think the deck was stacked. It was a deck from Air Force One and I just didn't get a look at it first," complained Roy Romer, Colorado's Governor, after a recent flight with the President.

Mr Clinton is continuing a fine tradition of card-playing Presidents. George Washington played for money and kept records of his winnings and losses. Thomas Jefferson played cards to relax during the drafting of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Truman and Churchill played poker as they travelled by train to Fulton, Missouri, for Churchill's "Iron Curtain speech" in 1946.

Nixon was another avid poker player who allegedly financed his 1946 congressional campaign with his winnings from the Navy. His game evidently deteriorated when he reached the White House. "Any guy who hollers over a \$40 pot has no business being President," Tip O'Neill, the former House Speaker, once retorted when Nixon complained of his losses.



Tobacco buyers examine some of the crop on sale at the opening of the auction season in Harare yesterday

Race threat to Zimbabwe tobacco barons

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S tobacco crop, worth about £475 million this year, has become a racial battleground between the predominantly white establishment that has dominated the industry for decades and a group of militant black businessmen trying to seize control of the lucrative trade.

When the five-month selling season opened yesterday on Harare's auction floors, Peter Richards, president of the Zimbabwe Tobacco Association, which represents the estimated 2,000 growers, gave a warning of "disruption" to the industry.

Zimbabwe is the world's biggest exporter of tobacco,

with 200 million kilograms of soft, golden aromatic leaf this year that is sought by cigarette manufacturers in Europe and America to flavour smoke that would otherwise be acrid and coarse. The weed is the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy.

However this year a serious attempt is being made in the name of "affirmative action" to put control of the trade in black hands. The man behind this is Roger Boka, a former insurance salesman who now commands a huge financial empire and has powerful backing within President Mugabe's ruling Zanu (PF) party. Mr Boka is notorious

for newspaper advertisements which vilify whites and "Uncle Tom" blacks. One features a giant python crushing a crocodile, and carries a warning that this is what will happen to whites in the drive to "clean our society once and for all".

Mr Boka began alarming the tobacco mandarins two weeks ago with the announcement that he proposed buying the entire 1996 crop by tender, which would allow him to hold cigarette manufacturers virtually to ransom. He then outlined plans to build the world's largest tobacco auction floor near the capital.

This week he announced

that he had managed to get the black-dominated tobacco regulating body to refuse to grant a buying licence to a new merchant company, because it was white-run, and denounced Denis Norman, the Agriculture Minister and the longest-serving white in Mr Mugabe's Cabinet, for having "a hidden agenda which seeks to promote white supremacy".

"He cannot be disregarded as a loony," a Western diplomat said. "He is immensely wealthy and politically connected. Change the word white to Jew, and it is indistinguishable from Nazi propaganda."

Umpire in Indian poll sees off thugs

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN LUCKNOW

A LOW-KEY Indian general election campaign moves quietly towards the first day of voting this week, watched over with evident satisfaction by a lone bureaucrat who has terrorised the politicians into uncommonly good behaviour.

There have been no riots, violent processions or murders of candidates. There are no blaring public address systems, no cavalcades, few banners and posters. Nor is there any obvious vote-buying. Freelance gangs of goondas, or thugs, who traditionally menace the electorate in marginal seats, have found themselves unemployed.

There has not been an Indian election like it, indeed, many of India's millions of voters are not even sure there is an election, given the absence of rowdiness. Slum dwellers, vital to a politician's fortunes, are even finding it hard to extract the usual pre-election cheap liquor from money-strapped candidates.

The politicians' restraint has been imposed by T.N. Seshan, the Chief Election Commissioner, who gave a warning that candidates who exceeded modest new election spending limits would have their victories revoked. A man true to his threats, Mr Seshan is moving about the country looking for displays of "money" power, which are astonishingly few. That explains why there has been no bloodshed: riots, often used as election tools, are expensive to instigate.

The Chief Election Commissioner has even frowned on graffiti. This comes particularly hard to the Communists of Calcutta, who have fought many violent graffiti wars with rival parties and turned their city into the world's graffiti capital. The party now seeks permission before daubing somebody's wall. "We have to be careful of Seshan," a party official said.

The commissioner, who regards his work as a crusade, lamented, in a book entitled *The Degeneration of India*: "Successive governments have sought to reduce elections to a farce. Every party has been involved in despoiling the system. The decline of politics and politicians in India is visible, visceral and violent."

To level the political playing field, he has even ordered candidates not to use state helicopters for electioneering. He rejected complaints from senior politicians that travelling by road was a security risk, forcing them to enter the rural backwaters by road, which for many has been a rare experience.

Prayer man convicted of son's death

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

A MAN who shunned modern medicine in favour of prayer has been found guilty by a jury in Oregon of letting his son die of leukaemia.

Lloyd Hays, a member of the fundamentalist Church of the First Born, ignored doctors who said his son could be cured. Instead he put his faith in an ancient anointing ceremony and churchgoers.

Tony Hays, 7, died in November 1994. He was the twentieth child of parents belonging to the church to die unnecessarily since 1975, said a group against endangering lives with "faith healing".

Hays was acquitted of first- and second-degree manslaughter, but convicted of "criminally negligent homicide" and faces up to five years' jail.

Keating closes career of radical reform

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

PAUL KEATING, one of the most controversial and radical leaders in Australian political history, resigned from parliament yesterday, marking the end of a career which spanned nearly 30 years as an MP.

Six weeks after losing power in the general election, the Prime Minister credited with masterminding Labor's most successful period in office handed in his resignation to the Governor-General, Sir William Deane. The resignation surprised nobody, coming as it did before next week's first session of parliament with John Howard, the Liberal leader, as Prime Minister. The former Labor leader, a boilermaker's son who left school at 14, had no wish to see his old adversary in the Prime Minister's chair.

Mr Keating, 52, who presided over wide-ranging economic changes and encouraged closer links with Asia during his period as Treasurer and later Prime Minister, dominated Australian politics for nearly 15 years. In his letter of resignation, he wrote: "I leave very proud

of what the Labor Government did, of what the Labor movement did, and of what Australians did in the past decade to build a competitive economy and marry it to a good Australian society."

Mr Keating's legacy also has much to do with Asia, the monarchy and Aborigines. He built stronger links with Australia's northern neighbours, galvanised public opinion on republicanism and promoted legislation which translated the historic Mabo High Court ruling on native title into administrative law for the nation's indigenous people.

Last night Mr Keating's critics and supporters alike acknowledged his achievements. His successor as Labor leader, Kim Beazley, said: "He has undoubtedly been one of the architects of our most successful periods in office." But Ian Sinclair, former National Party leader, suggested he was ahead of his time. "Whether it was the republic, the flag or economic strategems, most of them were not related to the average concerns of most of us."



Mr Keating, not a strict observer of protocol, puts an arm round the Queen while greeting the royal visitor to Australia in 1992

Nigeria sanctions to be tightened

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

A COMMONWEALTH task force agreed yesterday to tighten sanctions to make Nigeria a pariah state until General Sani Abacha's military Government shows greater respect for human rights and accelerates his timetable for a return to democracy.

All Commonwealth countries will be asked to ban air links, freeze the assets of junta members, and introduce a visa policy denying entry to any member of the Nigerian military Government and its civilian supporters. Commonwealth countries will also ban sporting links, downgrade diplomatic representation and discourage cultural contacts. Britain vetoed an oil ban which would have deprived Nigeria of 90 per cent of its foreign earnings.

The task force also agreed to break off the Commonwealth

dialogue with Nigeria that accompanied the sanctions voted last autumn in retaliation for the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists from the Ogoni tribe. General Abacha has refused to receive a Commonwealth delegation, and the eight ministers decided yesterday that there was no point attempting to arrange a meeting.

Meanwhile, a high-ranking Nigerian delegation left yesterday for China to discuss broadening relations and sign bilateral agreements.

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Unabomber suspect revels in pleasures of prison

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

JAIL seems to be suiting Theodore Kaczynski, the former mathematics don and woodland hermit suspected of being the deadly Unabomber. While awaiting trial he has settled comfortably into his cell at Lewis and Clark County prison, Montana. In fact, he thinks the place just grand.

Mr Kaczynski, arrested two weeks ago at his remote, hand-built cabin, has pronounced himself most satisfied with the jail food. The nourishing menus of, for instance, turkey noodle casserole, the occasional roast, and perhaps a sinful slice of pecan pie.

have been an improvement on the "wild porcupine and turnips" diet on which he subsisted as a free man.

The plates have been wiped spotless, and guards have been asked to convey Mr Kaczynski's compliments to the good ladies in the kitchens of the nearby Cooney Convalescent Home, where the prison victuals are cooked.

Awakening in prison is more agreeable than it was in the wilds of Montana, where dawn rose cold with the snarl of a cougar at the door and no prospect of running water. Mr Kaczynski can now take a hot shower before settling down to breakfast of muesli, toast and milky coffee. The once penniless eccentric can

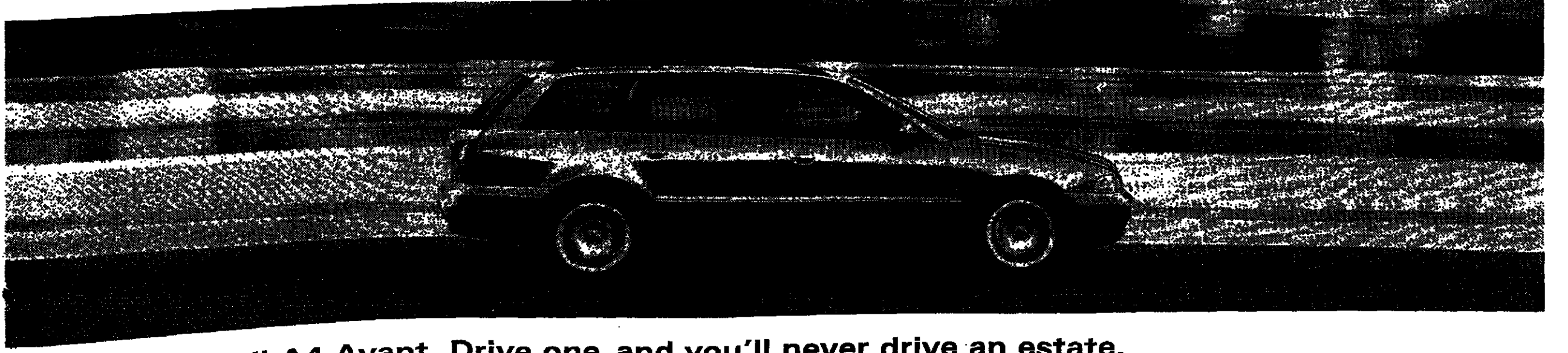
ponder how best to spend his weekly pocket money of \$20 (£13) — probably on snacks at the prison tuckshop, supplied by Jolly O's Gas & Go convenience store. They taste better than cold rabbit bones.

The former university teacher spends his days reading books from the prison's 700-volume library and penning his thoughts. Charlie Carson, a bail bondsman who visited Mr Kaczynski in his cell, said: "He's not pacing. He's reading or writing. He's a mellow dude." In the afternoon, if feeling stale, he can take a jog in the prison yard.

Guards have found America's most wanted suspect a pleasure to deal with

and the suspected mass bomber has spruced himself up with a haircut and beard-trim, plus a new set of clothes. On arrival at the jail he stank like a raccoon, but the ripe, torn jeans and bandana have been swapped for a sports jacket, denim shirt and Chinos trousers.

On the legal front, things may look grim as federal investigators prepare to charge him for the bombing campaign which lasted for 18 years and killed three people. But, as far as his daily routine goes, Mr Kaczynski is finding that after years of existing in an unheated, unplumbed 10ft by 12ft country cabin, life in a 8ft by 10ft, heated, clean prison cell is a cinch.



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The maxi-skirt's back, long and lean

Skirts are skimming the ankles again, but without a flounce or frill in sight — these are plain and simple, in light, fresh fabrics

Fashion journalist of the year



IAIN R. WEBB

I GUESS it had to happen. As tops began to shrink to minuscule proportions it was almost inevitable that the skirt would eventually get longer... and longer. This summer sees the return of the ankle-skimming skirt as designers revisit the 1970s, when the maxi-skirt last reigned supreme.

However, this time around the look is nothing like the hippy-trippy image of yesteryear. There are no droopy hemlines, no chintzy-print cheesecloth or flouncy gypsy frills. Instead the new-look 1990s maxi-skirt follows an understated outline which matches perfectly fashion's predilection for all things minimal. It heralds a new spartan elegance which makes much of plain and simple, a taster of the long, lean uncluttered silhouette which designers recently previewed in their autumn/winter collections.

"The long skirt is a refreshing alternative to the more tailored look that has been fashionable of late," says Kim Stringer, associate fashion and beauty director of *Elle*. "It looks great worn with strappy sandals or flat pumps."

The longer length comes in two main silhouettes. Designer Helmut Lang in Paris cuts a straight tube skirt in white lace which stops just short of the ankle, while in Milan Gucci favours an A-line shape in silky jersey. Other designers worked on the same theme: Dolce & Gabbana, Trussardi, Donna Karan, Ally Capellino, Alberta Ferretti, MaxMara, Prada, Jean Paul Gaultier and Gianfranco Ferré all feature their own version in their collections. Lightweight fabrics which move easily are essential. The look is pretty at Ferretti (pale printed organza layers) and practical at DKNY (a stretch tube which packs away to almost nothing for that summer holiday).

Stringer points out that although the new longer hemline may hide the leg, it switches emphasis to the feet. Open-toe and strappy summer shoes reveal the flesh, so a pedicure at the beginning of the summer is essential, and watch out for pasty-looking flesh which has been hidden away through the winter. "Try spray-on tans," says Stringer. She recommends Estée Lauder's Supertan as one of the best.

If you don't have the time or inclination to try a fake tan, foundation-coloured tights which look as though your legs have been perfectly made-up are useful. Cosmetics for Legs by Sock Shop are effective and inexpensive.

The hippest stylists proffer brightly coloured tights including red, blue and orange, but the look is extreme and rarely works off the catwalk or page. And don't forget that a long skirt brings its own lifestyle problems. "Remember to pick up a handful of fabric when getting on the bus," says Stringer.



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- 4 Black cotton jersey skirt, £39.99. Morgan, selected branches nationwide (0171-436 5255).
- 5 Black lace A-line skirt, £27.99. Top Shop, selected branches nationwide (0171-291 2351).
- 6 Cream fine knitted skirt, £180. Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-629 4774).
- 7 Chocolate brown A-line organza skirt, £180. MaxMara, 32 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-287 3434).
- 8 White fine cotton skirt, £27.50. Marks & Spencer, selected branches nationwide (0171-935 4422).
- 9 White linen button-back skirt, £175. Margaret Howell, 29 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (0171-584 2462).
- 10 Black jersey hipster skirt, £27.99. Top Shop, as above.
- 11 Red shiny hipster wrap skirt, £125. Joseph, as above.
- 12 Cream open-weave bias-cut skirt, £73. Jigsaw, 126-127 New Bond Street, W1 and selected branches nationwide (0181-878 8443).
- 13 Black button-through ankle-length skirt, £795. Chanel, 26 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 5040).
- 14 Black crêpe skirt with side split, £109. Agnes B, 58-62 Heath Street, NW3 (0171-431 1995).
- 15 Long zip-fronted white neoprene skirt, £290. Iceberg, 82 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-225 0515).
- 16 Navy marocain satin zip split skirt, £77. Jigsaw, as above.

ABOVE LEFT: Long black rayon skirt, £195; black rayon shirt, £560; thin belt, £55; black T-bar sandals, £130; Gucci, 33 Old Bond Street, W1; 17-18 Sloane Street (0171-499 1081). Silver choker, £202. Jacqueline Rabum, Jess James, 3 Newburgh Street, W1 (0171-221 9820).

ABOVE CENTRE: Black rayon shirt, £45, French Connection, 249 Regent Street, W1 (0171-580 2507). White knitted viscose skirt, £185. Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-629 4774). White buckle sandals, £210. Sergio Rossi, 12 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (0171-225 0663).

ABOVE RIGHT: White marocain satin bodice, £49.95. Jigsaw stores nationwide. Navy rayon jersey skirt, £85. Whistles, 27 Sloane Square, SW1 and stores nationwide (0171-730 9819). T-bar sandals, £285 to order. Gina, 189 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2932). Silver arm bracelet, £216. Jacqueline Rabum, as above.

LEFT: Cream knitted viscose vest, £125. Joseph, 26 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-629 4774). Black viscose skirt, £55. French Connection, as above. Black grosgrain ribbon sandals, £235. Manolo Blahnik, 49-51 Old Church Street, SW3 (0171-352 8622). Silver choker, £202. Jacqueline Rabum, as above.

Photographs by CHRIS CRAYMER
Make-up by Kim Jacob, hair by Robert Morrison, stylist Tracey Jacob

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The English remain very snobbish about food, even if we have surrendered to a fast food revolution

Why we still are what we eat

The English are snobbish about food that doesn't make sense abroad. Eating well is seen as an elitist activity

When John Prescott recently announced himself to be middle class, evidence, even rigged evidence, had to be found immediately to support his claim. In the form of a bottle of champagne. The bottle of champagne, or the one that appeared to be standing in front of the Prescotts at their table, turned out not to exist, but the imagined correlation holds fast. Champagne, in this country, is the drink of the triumphant arriviste. It is a symbol — remember those champagne-guzzling yuppie years? — of whooping upward class mobility. The taste of the drink is immaterial. It is the cost that matters. It is a peculiarly English focus: the French, who generally take a much more symbolic view of things than we do, still like to think of champagne foremost as a wine. Of course, its expensiveness lends it a certain cultural weight, and it would be foolish to deny that in all Europe it does stand for something other than itself. It can never be the drink of the common man, even if the common man drinks it.

I am always resistant to the picture of the English as more entrenched in class divisions than any other country. Snobbishness is not a particularly English vice. But we are snobbish about food in a way that just doesn't make sense abroad. For all that we pay lip service to the idea that standards of cooking and eating, of food itself, have improved enormously over the years, it remains the case that eating well is seen, as an elitist activity.

Thirty years ago it was considered not exactly polite to talk about food, now no one ever stops. It is the subject. But I don't think it is food itself that grips so many people, so much as what they think it says about us. When I was talking about this to Laurie Taylor on *The Afternoon Shift* on Friday, he remarked that dry white wine had, for years now, been the middle-class drink, but ever since the working classes, lurching on, had taken it up themselves, the middle classes had anxiously switched to red wine. I, innocently,

had thought the sudden thirst for red wine had been prompted by all those reports about the wonderful, heart-enhancing and generally medicinal properties of the stuff. But of course, he's completely right.

The whole foodie revolution was never really to do with food. I may have written a restaurant column for 12 years, I may write a food column for *Vogue*, but anyone who calls me a foodie is an instant enemy. A foodie is not someone who loves food so much as labels. The whole thing is too ruled by trend and fad to have any integrity anyway: being worried about what the well-dressed fashion plate is wearing has little to do with food.

Food either tastes good or it does not. It doesn't make sense to have everyone raving about sun-dried tomatoes one moment and showering contempt on them the next. I have always thought they tasted like blood-flavoured chewing gum, but for a while they were held to be the must-have ingredient. Sun-dried tomatoes were overtaken by bottarga, the dried and powdered roe of mullet, that was quickly trounced by baby squid, by polenta, by bruschetta, by balsamic vinegar and so on. All these foodstuffs are good — there's nothing shameful in liking or eating them. But there is something so dispiriting somehow in

the anxiety that attends their preparation, as if the cooks were keeping some anxious eye on a checklist of socio-culinary desirability.

Cooking has become a hobby, part of the leisure-industry age, which itself is devoted to the cult of Lifestyle. Thus, it's all aspirational. You don't eat what you like, but what you think the person you want to be would eat. There's an awful lot of inverted snobbery about, too. In the Eighties, food had to be refined within an inch of its life, now such obvious elaborations seem distinctly un-chic to us. Anyone who wants to look as if they know the business must now boast aggressively rustic and rough-hewn tastes. Although there is some sense in which it is all right to eat peasant food only so long as it comes from foreign peasants. This itself is odd, surely. In France they may be rediscovering *la cuisine du terroir*. In Italy they do indeed stress the importance of *la cucina casalinga*, but these consciously less rarefied ways of cooking are allowed to stand alongside other culinary traditions. Also, they are at least their own traditions.

What's more, I begin to wonder if our wholesale embrace of peasant food isn't really prompted by the much trumped enlargement of the middle class. After all, if everyone's going to be middle-

class, what's the middle class to do other than show disdain for its very trappings? As a case in point, it would, these days, be considered naïf beyond words to give people queuelles at a dinner party, but the ultimate in chic to serve up fishcakes. And once the masses twigged that prawn cocktail was beyond the socio-culinary pale and so stopped eating it, the middle classes made a concerted effort to take it up again. It hasn't quite caught on. Perhaps a degree of nervousness remains that no one will notice the full, enlightened, ironic playfulness of the gesture.

Of course the anxiously aspirational role that food has taken on is not entirely a new phenomenon. Early industrialisation meant that cooking lost its rural, regional base. Food production became separated from where and how people lived. That continues. In a strange way, nearly all cooking can easily seem, or be, affectation. Chefs are always trying to rediscover English food, to make shepherd's pie chic. There isn't a trendy restaurant worth its sea salt that doesn't have mash on the menu now. But the trouble is, as long as we let professional restaurant chefs dictate what we should be cooking in our kitchens at home, we are losing any real claim to a proper culinary tradition.

The working-class hero act is just as bad, however. I have no time for people who sound off about "poncy food", claiming that an appetite for anything other than spongy textured, plastic pink sausages and baked beans is mere pretension. I like a bacon sandwich as much as the next person, but I don't see that the bacon has to give off a hissing white foam when heated to be respectable.

But for all that old-style class antagonism is meant to have subsided as we are all silenced and united in our desire for Habitat sofas and holidays abroad, it is clear that in some respects the class war remains — and the army, as ever, marches on its stomach.



Nigella Lawson

The day I left the earth and found lift-off

It is not every day that you discover a completely new pleasure, one you had never thought of exploring, offering you layers of experience you had barely dreamt of. I have not, I hasten to say, stumbled on some exotic new drug, although it could become just as addictive and every bit as expensive. I refer to the joy of helicopter flying. Specifically, in my case, travelling on a plum-coloured French machine

called a Dauphin, in glorious weather over the snow-capped hills and islands of northern Scotland at somebody else's expense.

For those readers (and, this being a highly superior newspaper, they may well form a sizeable proportion) for whom taking a number 11 bus, I apologise; what follows will strike them as ridiculously naïve. But just as James Thurber once observed that

The joy of vertical flight has only one drawback. It fills Magnus Linklater with a yearning for more

nobody who has wrestled with a self-adjusting card table can ever be quite the same again, so I believe my post-helicopter life has changed irrevocably.

For a start, and just to get it out of the way, there is the thrill of fear. Somebody once observed that if the engine of a helicopter gives out in mid-flight, then gliding to safety is not an option, since it rapidly acquires the aerodynamics of a housebrick. However, the Dauphin had two engines, which were a source of considerable comfort, as was our pilot, Dominic, whose calm professionalism was immensely soothing. We took off from the lavas of Skibo Castle in Sutherland, a baronial pile built by Andrew Carnegie, and recently refurbished in lavish style by Peter de Savary, and headed for the island of Lewis.

Our task was to judge works of art, poetry, photography and sculpture for the



Up, up and away: the only way to travel

forthcoming Highland Festival. Since we had to cover several far-flung venues in the course of a day, the helicopter was the only option. I would like to try to describe the joys of vertical flight, the stomach-dropping sensation of rising into thin air, the little dip forward, almost a bow, followed by an effortless lift-off, a gentle scoop sideways and a half-turn as the ground falls away

beneath you and you wonder just for a second whether you are going to slip sideways back to earth, before you find yourself brushing the tops of the tallest trees and watching the building beneath shrink to the size of a matchbox. I would like to describe it, but the sense of exhilaration cannot be captured in mere words.

We began in mist and rain, but as we headed west the cloud lifted, and under clear skies, floating in a sea of Mediterranean blue, we beheld the Hebrides, not quite as in a dream, but certainly from an angle that Walter Scott never even dreamt of. We hugged the contours, low enough to allow us to look up at the white peaks of famous hills like Suilven and Canisp as we passed beneath them, but high enough for us to see as far north as Cape Wrath and as far south as the Cuillin of Skye. Beneath us, the straggling west coast was laid out like a map.

A helicopter keeps you in touch with the earth but gives you the freedom to escape from it. You feel you can go anywhere, and mostly you can. For instance, we decided we would picnic by the ancient stone circle of Callanish, so we landed on a square of tarmac the size of a postage stamp. Dominic taking us between two rows of electricity pylons, easing his machine down as if he was reversing into a parking space. We chose a football field at Gairloch, a spare bit of airfield. Stormy, the lavas again at Skibo. We coasted over snowfields in the mid-Highlands, waved to an astonished hill-walker some-

where above Achnashene, inspected a ruined monastery miles from anywhere, circled the Al Fayed's splendid castle in Easter Ross, and checked out a colony of seals on a sand bar in the Dornoch Firth. We landed in time for cocktails.

There is only one drawback to this new pleasure. You yearn for more. You think of all the places you would like to explore from the air, the ease with which you could flip over to St Kilda and then

lunch at Glencoe, the possibility of revisiting all the places you have only seen, boringly, from ground level. In short, you want a helicopter of your own.

I made some discreet inquiries, and discovered that buying a new Dauphin these days works out at about £2 million. That, in my view, is a bargain — I contemplate having the down payment in time for the next millennium. It is, after all, the only way to travel.

MEDIA

● Jeremy Paxman, political interviewer or vandevelde turn? Roy Hattersley investigates

● A headline too far: Giles Coren on taboo-breaking at the Sunday Express

page 25

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THE REFERENDUM TRAP

Time and space are running out for Major

The mood against Europe is hardening: on the doorsteps, in the newspapers and at Westminster. A confluence of circumstance, from beef to fish, from the single currency to the social chapter, has produced a powerful exasperation with the impotence of Britain in the face of Brussels.

This mood has been growing for four years. The Times has for four years argued that the Prime Minister has failed to feel its force. The Prime Minister has proved mostly deaf to our arguments: the Tory party has proved wholly deaf to the case that he be removed from office. Now the cries of anger are louder and more numerous. But the real options for action to rescue Britain's position have become sadly more reduced.

In the shortening run towards the next general election none of the three main political parties can now meet the people's will. We commend those politicians who are trying to do so, notably Sir James Goldsmith and John Redwood. The air is filling with solutions, new policies, new referendums. Some are attractive: some are sincere: some are workable: some might be effective. But little of significance is available to this Cabinet under this Prime Minister at this stage of the cycle of European events.

Mr Redwood meets Sir James today. He is likely to propose, for example, that the Government should announce an early referendum, before a general election, on Britain's place in Europe. The question might be: "Do you support a Europe of nation states or a European superstate?" or "Are you in favour of a simple common market in Europe or would you prefer more political integration?" or even "Who should run Britain: Westminster or Brussels?"

Mr Redwood's plan is that John Major should put this question to the public soon. Such a scheme has the double attraction, he thinks, of spiking Sir James's guns and putting the Labour Party on the spot. The referendum would be easily won by the anti-Brussels cause, possibly giving the Tories enough of a boost to call an instant general election on the promise that they would renegotiate Britain's terms of membership of the European Union, including the common fisheries policy and the supremacy of European Court of Justice judgments over British law. Labour would be wrongfooted and the Referendum Party would have either to withdraw its threat to put up candidates in Conservative seats or appear

as a mere eccentric vehicle for its founder. Political life is rarely so simple. First, the referendum question has to be agreed by Parliament. One such as the above, promising ready political gains for the Eurosceptics, would not find a majority in the House of Commons, where the Opposition would coalesce with Tory Euro-enthusiasts to water down the proposition. Once that was done, Labour would have no problem backing the Government line in the referendum campaign, thus nullifying the point of it.

Meanwhile, the very announcement of a new referendum would probably be enough to tip Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, into a resigning fury. It was hard enough for Mr Major to keep him inside during the carefully crafted deal on the single currency referendum. This would be a consultation too far for Mr Clarke, who has disdain for popular opinion on Europe. Euro-sceptics might be delighted, in the interests of purity, to see the loss of Mr Clarke and his allies from the Government; but with a majority of one, and a memory of the fatally damaging argument between Nigel Lawson and Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister is unlikely to agree.

It is easy to see where Mr Redwood's interests lie. After a defeat at the next election, he will be able to claim that, had the Government only taken his advice, the Goldsmith threat would have been removed and the Tories would have exploited their main electoral advantage over Labour. And it is easy too to sympathise with Sir James's case. As we argued at nauseam at the time, the Government should have consulted the people when the Maastricht treaty was drummed through Parliament: today's dissatisfaction stems directly from the sense that politicians have handed over the people's democratic birthright without having asked the people first. But it is difficult to devise a referendum question now that could deliver any positive change in Britain's position.

The Government can still look at other measures that might begin to restore its standing as the party that defends Britain's interests in Europe. Mr Major may be prepared to defend his position on the beef ban by non-cooperation on routine Brussels business. He talks of unnamed "other options" if he fails to achieve the lifting of the ban on Monday. But time for clarity and action is short — and shortening fast.

THE FACE OF SHAKESPEARE

No science unmasks him, no cause or crank theory claims him

Not for the first (or last) time, Shakespeare is to be unmasked. Tomorrow a German scholar will publish photofit confessions of the portraits of the Bard to validate the Kesselstatt "death mask". Moreover, having gazed electronically upon their face of Shakespeare, German police computers scan a bulge in the tear duct of his left eye. This suggests to the searchers that he did not die, according to legend, from a chill caught while drinking with Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, but went blind from a cancerous eye tumour common in 1616.

Once you believe that, there is internal evidence in support. For the works are suggestively thick with eye imagery and the horrors of blindness. Shakespearean tears drop as fast as the Arabian trees their medicinal gum. Siren tears scald and drown the wind. Hamlet sees his mother like Niobe, all tears, calls himself a rogue and peasant slave for not weeping for Hecuba, and in a pun that falls with a splash, forbids his tears: "Too much of water hath thou, poor Ophelia."

Blindness is Shakespeare's conventional metaphor for Cupid, Fortune, lovers and politicians. The most terrible scene in tragedy comes in *King Lear* when the Duke of Gloucester has his eyes gouged out. Gloucester stumbled when he saw, but saw the truth once he was blind. And he was a work of the playwright's professional old age.

Because of his influence on the Romantics and the ease with which they translate him,

Germans see Shakespeare as an honorary German who had the misfortune to be born in Stratford. But he defies all attempts to enlist him. He has been claimed as a bigot of the Right, because of his contemporary fear of rebellion and foreigners. But he can just as well be press-ganged as a proto-revolutionary. For his disturbers of the civic peace come from the top of society, and he shows a fondness for English rustics in such unlikely settings as Denmark, Athens and Bohemia. Is it wrong to detect his sympathy even for such an unpromising underdog as Caliban?

Critics who interpret sonnets as autobiography claim Shakespeare as a homosexual. They forget that Elizabethan sonnet sequences were fashionable vehicles for eternal triangles of all angles. And heroines such as Juliet, Rosalind, Perdita and Viola are interested in heterosexual sex in a way that suggests that their author knew what he was writing about. In fact, the man who created such diverse characters as Hamlet, Falstaff, Volunnia and the Nurse, did not need to recycle his own life for material. His creatures were of imagination all compact.

The passion to know what Shakespeare looked like and how he died is understandable. But his true lovers, both German and English, know that they are chasing the sun. The German Shakespeareans have not answered the unanswerable. But they have done everyone a favour by sending us back to works that are a universal photofit.

RETHINK FOR THE DAY

A slot for the spiritual, not the temporal

The BBC *Today* programme's Thought for the Day, a 24-minute moral or religious meditation, is prone to recurring outbreaks of argument over who should be allowed to do the thinking and how they should do it. The heart of the matter is always the same: the right balance between spiritual refreshment and topicality. The search for "relevance" which afflicts many churchmen has also diluted the spiritual message of Radio 4's preachers to the nation. The BBC shows welcome signs of recognising that Thought for the Day will only remain valued and popular if the spiritual takes precedence.

A few thoughts on the "moral dimension" of the latest row over education policy slides quickly into politics. One of the contributors now being given a rest by the BBC would have us believe that his fearless commentator were censored by pusillanimous Tories on the Irish peace process and the Scotts were censored by bullying politicians. This is a conspiracy theory too far.

Freedom of speech may be a live issue in many parts of the world, but it is not under threat on *Today*. The programme consists of almost nothing else. Political homilies which masquerade as sermons seldom offer original or profound judgments on public policy. It is possible to argue that Jesus might well

have been cross about class sizes, French nuclear tests or the poll tax. But this tells us little of spiritual value. A trite opinion is not a penetrating insight into moral dilemmas.

To urge Thought for the Day to stick to what it does best is not to suggest that the thinkers should confine themselves to theological speculation. When an important event dominates the news and preoccupies the country, the day's Thought needs to take account of the context. The shootings at Dunblane lead naturally into reflections on evil or bereavement. The best Thoughts lead the listener gently from observation of the world to a path of moral reasoning. One of the best of this year's crop, the Chief Rabbi's defence of conversation and storytelling in families, deftly blended ethics and daily life.

The most powerful argument against excessive "relevance" in Thought for the Day is the appeal of a quiet pause for thought. If Today wants to transmit more opinions on the Government's policies from outside the London studio circuit, nothing prevents it from doing so. But Thought for the Day should always strive to be a firebreak in the natural disasters, instant analysis and news dispatches. The listener asks only that the speaker helps, in the Psalmist's words, to "renew a right spirit in me."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Nuclear safety and question of environmental disaster

From Sir Patrick Duffy

Sir, Your report from Moscow ("Yeltsin refuses to back Clinton on Nato's move east", April 22) will arouse the fears of many that whatever nuclear safety measures were agreed, the Group of Seven leaders have "missed an opportunity to improve global safety".

Your welcome leader, "Nuclear truths" (April 19), had reminded us that ten years after Chernobyl the "most disturbing statistics of all are in the Kola peninsula".

The problems facing the Russian Navy are not confined to decommissioned submarines and the handling of radioactive wastes. Moscow-based reports admit that active submarines have nowhere to unload their spent nuclear fuel. Official sources admit to figures that can only point to a worsening of the overall position, given Russia's limited dismantling facilities.

The current emphasis on profitability in funding Russia's essential structures and the Russian Navy's preference for modernisation make it unlikely that environmental safety will receive sufficient resources.

The Moscow summit was in a position to assist by mobilising institutional, technical and financial resources. But this would call for a clear picture. Is it likely that such an audit would be permitted?

You also report that the West "had failed to provide fresh funds", and should now, according to your leader, do "more to persuade taxpayers of the urgency of the threat". Is it likely that taxpayers would respond as they became aware of the growth in vast amounts of Russian money in private bank accounts abroad and read reports that three new submarines joined the Russian fleet last year?

The economic problems in Russia need a lot of attention, and so money will be found for them. As for the clean-up of the nuclear wastes, will we have to wait for a disaster?

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK DUFFY,
153 Bennerthorpe,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire,
April 22.

From Captain Richard Sharpe, RN, Editor, Jane's Fighting Ships

Sir, Your leading article was the latest indication that the media are in danger of winding themselves up for more environmental hysterics, with its particular reference to the Russian submarine bases around Murmansk.

The Russians have an acknowledged nuclear power plant decommissioning problem, and some of their official comments are not unrelated to a campaign to get the rest of us to come up with financial assistance. Their

main difficulty is the volume of material that has to be reprocessed. If their nuclear engineering standards and practices are not as rigorous as ours, it does not follow that the Kola peninsula is some sort of unexploded Hiroshima.

A pressurised water reactor (PWR) which has been shut down for a long period generates only a small amount of residual heat, which is normally dissipated by convection, helped by the occasional stir-up by low-capacity pumps, until the fuel rods can be recovered, stored and reprocessed. There may be some radioactive contamination in the decommissioning procedure if it is done badly, and all radiation is potentially harmful, but we all live with low-level radioactivity in our daily lives.

By comparison, thousands are killed every year as a direct result of accidents with internal combustion engines and by the products of chemical waste and burnt fossil fuels, which cause respiratory and other diseases. In its way, this type of pollution is just as insidious as radiation, but is infinitely more widespread in its effects.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD SHARPE,
Foundry House,
Kingsley,
Bordon, Hampshire,
April 21.

Wartime internment

From Mrs Helen Simpson

Sir, Like Mrs Gertrude Timmis ("German-born widow to sue over internment", report, April 18) my father too was interned. He received an early-morning knock on the door from a courteous British policeman and was interned (without complaint) in a camp on York racecourse.

This compared to the fate of his family in Nazi Europe, who were dragged from their beds by Germans, suffered the most brutal treatment and were finally burned in ovens — who knows whether alive or dead.

This might not have been the fate of Mrs Timmis's family, but Germany was no picnic for the German population at the end of the war. Mrs Timmis should thank God every day, like my father did, for living in this country, and not jump on the litigious bandwagon after fifty years.

Yours faithfully,
HELEN SIMPSON,
Nurwood House,
Barrow Point Lane,
Pinner, Middlesex,
April 18.

Queen's role and Home's succession

From Sir Robert Rhodes James

Sir, An article on the Queen that refers to her as "Elizabeth Windsor" ("Duty and tradition: Elizabeth's reigning devotions", April 22) should warn the reader of the author's objectivity. In it Professor Pimlott repeats his interpretation of the Queen's role in the premiership succession crisis of October 1963 (report, April 15), about which Mr Vernon Bogdanor has also expressed disagreement (letter, April 20).

Professor Pimlott based his criticisms on two points — that she took Harold Macmillan's advice after he had ceased to be Prime Minister and that she had a strong personal preference for Lord Home over R. A. Butler.

On the first point, Macmillan had only just formally resigned and the Queen was fully entitled to ask him for his advice, as she had been in January 1957 when she had consulted Sir Winston Churchill. To describe this as unconstitutional seems to me an untenable charge.

On the latter point, given the Queen's character, the example of her father, and the quality of the advice she received, any personal opinions she might have had did not come into it. Also, following the precedent of October 1922 (when Lloyd George resigned and Bonar Law declined the King's request to form a government until he was sure that he could do so) Lord Home made a similar response to the Queen.

Macmillan's role may certainly be criticised, and has been by the supporters of Butler and several historians, but that of the Queen seems to me to be beyond reproach.

Also, despite my deep admiration and affection for Rab Butler, I am not convinced that Alec Home was the wrong choice — although perhaps for the wrong reasons.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
ROBERT RHODES JAMES,
The Stone House,
Great Gransden,
Sandy, Bedfordshire,
April 22.

Countryside attitudes

From Mr Richard Mountford

Sir, The General Secretary of the Countryside Movement, Mr Alex Armstrong (letter, April 16; see also letters, April 5) claims that his organisation is democratic because its supporters can express an opinion about policy, and because the board of directors takes into account advice received when making its decisions.

I believe that democracy involves the members of an organisation collectively having the power to determine the membership of its board of directors. The Countryside Movement has supporters instead of members, and gives them no power at all. It is not a democracy.

Incidentally, I sent off for a free information pack from the Countryside Movement, and when it arrived I was told in a covering letter that I had been registered as a supporter, and that I had to contact them if I was not happy about this. I took the time to do so, but I suspect that many of the organisation's "supporters" remain listed as such through inertia on their part, rather than intent.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD MOUNTFORD,
76 Springfield Road,
King's Heath, Birmingham,
April 17.

Lahore blast

From the High Commissioner for Pakistan

Sir, In his report of April 17, headed "Blast adds weight to ambitions of Iran", Christopher Thomas has taken on the role of investigator, prosecutor, judge and jury.

Pakistan is not a nation "gripped by drugs, poverty, amoral politics and virtual civil war". Karachi, for example, is now a peaceful city where the weekly death toll at the hands of terrorists is recently in triple figures. The present Government is combating poverty and the World Bank has applauded Pakistan's fiscal policies.

Thomas presents no evidence for his suggestion that "discredited establishment politicians" are behind the bombing of Iran's hospital. The bombing is a despicable act, and can only be the work of forces inimical to democracy.

Yours faithfully,
WAJID SHAMSUL HASAN,
High Commissioner for Pakistan,
35 Lowndes Square, SW1,
April 17.

Business letters, page 31

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

Respect for monarchy

From Mrs Sue Wood

Sir, Institutions such as the monarchy, the Church, the judiciary, Parliament and the police do indeed require respect; but they do not and cannot demand it as the Dean of St Paul's claims in his letter of April 18. Respect has to be earned.

It is precisely because we have an increasingly questioning society that we have discovered that nearly all of these institutions have long been rife with misogyny, hypocrisy and self-interest.

Yours faithfully,
SUE WOOD,
33 Gills Hill, Radlett, Hertfordshire,
April 18.

From the Reverend Alexander Horsburgh

Sir, The Dean of St Paul fails to appreciate an important distinction between love and respect, namely that

love must be unconditional while respect must be earned. Love, if it is unconditional, may survive whatever assaults it respects, since it depends on factors over which one may reasonably have control, such as honesty and competence, may be lost as well as won.

Perhaps he has confused respect with subservience. If those people within our society to whom respect may be due expect to gain it simply by wearing the uniform of office, be that mayoral chain, military braid, regal crown or clerical collar, rather than by their integrity and ability in office, then perhaps that is why the public are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the institutions before which our forebears would have automatically bowed their forelocks.

Yours faithfully,
ALEXANDER HORSBURGH
(Assistant Minister,
St Magnus Cathedral),
3 Mill Street, Kirkwall, Orkney,
April 18.

Forgotten squadron

From Mr Martin Bell

Sir, If the MoD's sole reason for not authorising the badge of RAF 273 Squadron is the one given by its spokesman (report, April 16), that "273 Squadron was disbanded in 1946 and was not in existence long enough to qualify for recognition", then the Royal Navy may be able to shed some light on the matter.

RAF 273 Squadron was formed in Great Yarmouth in 1918 and disbanded in 1919. It was re-formed in 1939 at RAF China Bay in Ceylon but more than half of its aircraft and personnel were supplied by the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and were on the books of HMS Lanka. The squadron took part in the defence of the island when it was attacked by Admiral Nagumo's First Air Fleet and its overwhelming force of Japanese bombers and fighter escorts. Half of the aircraft that managed to take off were shot down by the Japanese.

By July 1942, 273 Squadron had been equipped with Hurricane fighters and RAF personnel and the association with the Royal Navy ended. In 1944 the squadron left for the Burma Front and flew with the Earl of Bandon's 224 Group in the Arakan. The surviving members of 273 deserve an authorised badge. The squadron existed from September 1939 to January 1946, significantly longer than some RAF squadrons that do have authorised badges. The MoD should reconsider their decision.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN BELL,
East India Club,
16 St James's Square, SW1,
April 17.

Traveller's hymns

From Mr Norman F. Moore

Sir, An alternative Isaac Watts hymn for air travellers (letters, April 13, 22, 23) could be *Awake, our souls*, which contains the verse:

Swift as an eagle runs the air,
We'll mount aloft to Thine abode;
On wings of love our souls shall fly
Nor tire along the heavenly road.

The Methodist Church's *Hymns and Psalms* (1983) includes a four-verse hymn written by Robert Wesley Littlewood at the beginning of the Second World War. The first verse reads:

Thou who dost rule on high,
Our Father and our friend,
All those who ride the sky
We now to Thee commend:

For though among the stars they move,
They cannot rise beyond Thy love.
The hymn's final verse is perhaps even more appropriate today:

And soon from pole to pole
Thy kingdom, Lord, arise:
And peace alone control
The commerce of the skies:

Till all the gifts Thou givest men,
We to Thy glory give again.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN F. MOORE,
3 Martello Gardens,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
April 22.

From Mr R. J. Carlyon
Sir, "A campaign for real hymns" modelled on the Campaign for Real Ale" (report, April 21).

Whatever would Wesley have thought?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CARLYON,
Hogarth Cottage,
North Street, Somerton, Somerset,
April 21.

Teachers' view of boy's expulsion

From the General Secretary of NASUWT

Sir, It simply will not do for the Secretary of State for Education to off-load on to the local education authority the problem of the disruptive pupil at Glaisdale School ("Shepherd rebukes education chiefs over expulsion", report, April 23).

The Conservative Government legislated in 1986 to give parents the right to appeal over the heads of governing bodies following permanent exclusion of a child.

I have repeatedly argued with every Education Secretary since 1986 that these appeal panels have been used by irresponsible parents demanding the right to send their children to mainstream schools regardless of their off-springs' behaviour.

What price local management now? The Government argues that governing bodies are best placed to decide school policy on admissions; yet at the same time it believes that these bodies cannot be relied upon to make sensible decisions on exclusions.

Furthermore, these appeal panels are not truly independent. They are established solely by the local education authority. Membership and proceedings remain confidential. The local authority has a vested interest in forcing a disruptive pupil back into mainstream schools in order to avoid more expensive special educational provision.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL de GRUCHY,
General Secretary, NASUWT,
5 King Street, Covent Garden, WC2,
April 23.

A millennium wheel

From Mr Michael Middleton

Sir, So London's Ferris wheel is a stage closer to construction (report and photograph, April 18). How Paris and Rome and Prague must be kicking themselves.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL MIDDLETON,
84 Sirdar Road, W11,
April 18.

From Mrs Alexandra Scott

Sir, Doubtless a huge wheel could be completed in time for the millennium. The worry is that scientists would have insufficient time to develop further the recently announced strain of giant mice (report and article, April 11).

Yours faithfully,
ALEXANDRA SCOTT,
Malt Cottage, Lamb Corner,
Dedham, Colchester, Essex,
April 21.

From Mr Ivan Sleet

Sir, I read today that the advocates of the Ferris wheel say that from the top passengers would be able to see for 30 miles to Luton as well as to Tunbridge Wells.

I am reminded of the famous late 19th-century Cockney song, attributed to Edgar Bateman and George Le Brun:

Wiv a ladder and some glasses,
You could see to Ackney Marshes.
If it wasn't for the uses in between.

Yours sincerely,
IVAN SLEET,
Twistrees, 2 Kennard Road,
New Milton, Hampshire,
April 18.

From Mr Richard Westbrook

Sir, Why should traditionalists object to the siting of the proposed millennium wheel opposite the Palace of Westminster? Is it not normal to find a fair next to a circus?

Yours faithfully,
R. J. WESTBROOK,
Redwood House, Winterbrook,
Wallingford, Oxfordshire,
April 19.

On and on and on . . .

From Mr Brian Finney

Sir, Your obituary of Pearl Pleydell-Bouverie (April 13) suggests that with 65 years' service she may have been the longest-serving warden in the Church of England.

In this parish Richard Eve died in office as churchwarden on November 6, 1895, aged 97, having served for 70 years.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN FINNEY
(Churchwarden, St James's, Silsoe),
16 The Oaks,
Silsoe, Bedfordshire,
April 13.

Satisfaction in full

From Mr James P. Galliano

Sir, Your report on the supplier of the royal dinner ("Luxury that made royals want to join the inn crowd", April 23) states that "Customers often laugh ruefully when presented with the bill" (early editions only).

How else could they react after having been fed by M. Roux?

Yours faithfully,
J. GALLIANO,
Coopers & Lybrand,
PO Box 75, 10th Floor,
International Commercial Centre,
Casemates Square, Gibraltar,
April 22.

OBITUARIES

P. L. TRAVERS

P. L. Travers, OBE, creator of *Mary Poppins*, died yesterday at her home in London aged 96. She was born on August 9, 1899.

ALTHOUGH universally known and admired as the creator of *Mary Poppins*, P. L. Travers was a much wider and deeper person than simply the author of a fairy-story for children. In fact, she frequently asserted that *Mary Poppins* was not just a children's story but an attempt to convey universal truths through child-like (but not childish) expression. That is why she did not entirely like the Walt Disney film version of the primly archetypal, domineering nanny. "They missed the point," she said. "It's not about sugar and spice, but something from which we grown-ups can learn."

Her love of children permeated her life. On one occasion, having consented to give the end-of-year prizes at a small primary school in southwest London, held in the adjacent church, she unfurled parents and staff and delighted the children by leading the whole school in an impromptu song and dance up the nave and down the aisle.

From an early age she was absorbed in the expression of these truths through myth, symbol and story. *What the Bee Knows* (1989) was the nearest she ever came to writing an autobiography. "If you want to know more about me," she would say during rare interviews, "read *What the Bee Knows*." But, despite the worldwide acclaim that followed the making of *Mary Poppins* (first published in 1934), "PL" remained all her life a very private person.

Pamela Lyndon Travers was born Helen Lyndon Goff in Maryborough, Queensland, of Irish parents. While the name Travers is a family name which she adopted, there is no explanation for her other adopted name, Pamela, which she rarely used, preferring to be known simply as PL.



When her father Travers Robert Goff died, his three daughters were quite young (PL aged seven, was the eldest). The family moved to Bowral in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, eighty miles south of Sydney. Bowral was popular with wealthy Sydneysiders who wished to leave the city for the cool of the hills. Their home was only a stone's throw from that of another famous Australian, Sir Donald Bradman.

While still in her teens, PL's poems and articles began to appear in Australian newspapers and magazines and for two years she wrote a human interest column for a daily paper. Briefly, during the early 1920s, PL toured New South Wales as an actress and dancer with the Alan Wilkie Shakespearean Touring Company.

In 1924 she left Australia for England. In Ireland the following year she met the Irish poet, George Russell, always known as AE, who, as editor of the *Irish Statesman*, had accepted some of her verse for publication and was of great influence on her writing. He invited her to Dublin and through him PL met W. B. Yeats and other Irish poets who fostered her interest in, and knowledge of, world mythology. This deep and abiding interest led her at that time to study under the remarkable master, George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff, at Fontainebleau near Paris. This study, and the search for inner truth, she was to pursue for the rest of her life. During frequent visits to the United States, where she was invited to lecture and was writer-in-residence at Radcliffe College, 1965-66, and at

Smith College, 1966, PL lived for some time among the Navajo Indians, absorbing much of their myth and culture.

Mary Poppins was first published in 1934 and was soon popular all over the world, being translated into many languages. The year 1935 saw a sequel, *Mary Poppins Comes Back*, followed, in turn, by *Mary Poppins Opens the Door* (1944) and *Mary Poppins in the Park* (1952). Several other stories were later produced: *Mary Poppins from A to Z*, *A Mary Poppins Story for Colouring*, *Mary Poppins in the Kitchen*, *Mary Poppins in Cherry Tree Lane* and *Mary Poppins and the House Next Door*, this last published in 1989. There were many other publications, such as *I go by Sea, I go by Land* (1941), a fictional diary of an 11-year-old girl evacuated from England to the United States in the Second World War, and *About the Sleeping Beauty* (1975).

Myth and fairy-tale were always important elements in PL's work, notably *Friend Monkey* (1971), a novel based on the monkey god Hanuman from the Indian epic *Ramayana*. By an extraordinary coincidence a character in that book, taken from real life — little Trehunsey, the baby who cried most of the time — was visiting her home town of Bowral in New South Wales the day PL died.

For many years from 1976 virtually until her death PL was a contributing editor to *Parabola*, a United States magazine devoted to myth and tradition. *What the Bee Knows* is a collection of her essays and stories previously published in that magazine. The title is taken from an old English saying: "Ask the wild bee what the Druids knew."

P. L. Travers was appointed OBE in 1977 for her contribution to literature and in 1978 received an honorary doctorate from Chatham College, Pittsburgh. She never married and is survived by her adopted son.

DAPHNE BENNETT

Daphne Bennett, historian and biographer, died on April 17 aged 83. She was born on October 6, 1912.



LONG convinced that the reputation of Queen Victoria's daughter Vicky, whose husband reigned as German Emperor for 99 days in 1888, had been deliberately besmirched by Bismarck and her own son, the Kaiser Wilhelm II, Daphne Bennett set out to correct their distortions directly she had enough leisure as her children grew up.

In response to her passionate advocacy of Vicky's cause, Prince Wolfgang of Hesse granted her full and exclusive access to the immense amount of unpublished material in his possession. Vicky, the book which resulted from this, was an instant success when it came out in 1971.

It was later to be at the centre of a publishing storm when, in 1986, Daphne Bennett threatened to sue Princess Michael of Kent on the ground that the Princess's book *Crowned in a Far Country*, published in that year, had incorporated the results of her research for Vicky without acknowledging the fact. Princess Michael agreed to pay Daphne Bennett compensation and subsequent editions of *Crowned in a Far Country* carried acknowledgement of its author's debt to Daphne Bennett and others.

Daphne Bennett was next persuaded to attempt a biography of the Prince Consort, although she shared the then prevailing view that he was dreary, cold and formal. Work in the archives (hitherto neglected by English historians) of Albert's native Coburg taught her otherwise, and once again access to original material enabled her to correct previously held opinion. *King Without a Crown* (1977) was perhaps her most successful book.

Queen Victoria's Children (1980) continued the good

work by demonstrating that their home life was happy and cheerful, not the opposite as was commonly believed. She returned to major biography with a study of Margot Asquith which carried her well beyond the Victorian period. *Margot* (1984) traced the life of one of the famous Tennant sisters who, having married Herbert Henry Asquith, often strayed from the path of convention both politically and socially.

In the mid-1980s she was offered a free run of the scantily-used archives of Girton College, Cambridge. She welcomed the opportunity to restore a proper balance to the popular conception of women's liberation by stressing the primacy of education in a biography of *Emily Davies* (1990) the founder of Girton, the first institution for the higher education of women in England.

Daphne Bennett's distinctive talents as an historian

flourished best when she was able to use new evidence to correct old prejudices, and thus to influence broad trends in historical thinking. In this way she quickly secured and always maintained a notable reputation among professional historians and the general public. Her books attracted attention because of the liveliness of her writing. She had a sharp eye for significant detail — a quality often missing from the stilted prose of much present-day history.

Most of her subjects were women, with whom she found it easy to empathise, but she never allowed enthusiasm to overshadow a critical spirit. She had taken on academic historians at their own game and earned their respect. Her contributions to the understanding of the Victorian age will endure.

She is survived by her husband, the military historian Ralph Bennett, and her two sons.

ABDUL HAFEEZ KARDAR



Abdul Hafeez Kardar, cricketer and politician, died in Lahore on April 21 aged 71. He was born there on January 17, 1925.

AS AN emerging country in the late 1940s and the 1950s, Pakistan had no prouder young champion than Hafeez Kardar. He was the Imran Khan of his day — a handsome and outstandingly gifted cricketer, with more than a trace of arrogance. He led his country to a famous victory over England at the Oval in 1954 before becoming something of a political maverick. His last government appointment was as Pakistan's Ambassador to Switzerland from 1991 to 1993.

Even before Partition in 1947, Kardar was making a name for himself as a cricketer. As Abdul Hafeez he was the youngest member of the Indian side that came to England in 1946, the first postwar tour of this country. The first three of his 26 Test matches were, in fact, for 23 Pakistan played, in all of which he captained the side.

Rather than returning home after touring with India in 1946, he took his family name

of Kardar and went up to Oxford, where he read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at University College and learnt, in his own words, "to take up causes and remain firm in matters of national importance". He had three years in the Oxford University XI, 1947-49, as an imaginative, though somewhat unpredictable, all-rounder — a left-handed batsman with a wide and original range of strokes and a versatile left-arm bowler who took as many as 124 wickets for the university. County professionals were not accustomed to seeing a batsman already some yards down the pitch when they came to deliver the ball, as Kardar frequently was.

During the last of his long vacations from Oxford, and for a season after going down, Kardar played for Warwickshire, and for nearly 20 years after that he was the dominant figure in Pakistan cricket, first as captain, then as the most active and influential member of its board of control and finally, from 1972 to 1977, as its president. In February 1956, when a visiting MCC team became involved in an after-hours, decidedly over-boisterous incident with an umpire

during an unofficial Test match in Peshawar, cables were exchanged between the Pakistan board and the MCC which threatened the tour. These were masterminded by Kardar, the vexed captain of the home side and himself a strict disciplinarian. At different times, too, he advocated, with chauvinistic ardour, that the administration of cricket should be moved from Lord's to Lahore.

By the time he retired from playing, Kardar had led Pakistan to their first Test victories over Australia (in Karachi), India (in Lucknow), New Zealand (in Karachi) and West Indies (in Port of Spain) as well as over England. With good reason he was recognised as the builder of Pakistan cricket. His political career was chiefly as a member of the Punjab Provincial Assembly, 1970-77, for a time as Minister of Food and Education. His earlier business interests had been centred in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), first in oil and then in jute.

To the displeasure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, when he was Prime Minister of Pakistan, Kardar resented governmental interference in cricketing matters, always feeling that the game was better handled and administered by cricketing specialists. Nor did he see eye to eye with some of Pakistan's leading cricketers of a younger generation — Imran Khan, Majid Khan and Asif Iqbal among them — on the question of players' wages. Disenchanted by all of this, he had left the cricketing scene by the 1980s and, far from being involved in the recent World Cup, he was watching it on television in London when he collapsed during the match between India and Pakistan at Bangalore. After three days in St Mary's Hospital he returned home, where he died in his sleep.

He was married twice, first to the daughter of C. A. F. Hastillow, chairman of the Warwickshire County Cricket Club, and secondly to Shahzadi Perveen. There were three children of the two marriages, all of whom survive him.

PROFESSOR SIR JOHN GOLDING

Professor Sir John Golding, OBE, OJ, orthopaedic surgeon, died in Jamaica on March 23 aged 74. He was born in London on April 15, 1921.



JOHN GOLDING spent his life in Jamaica, where he built a reputation as an expert in tropical orthopaedic medicine. The turning point in his decision to stay in Jamaica came in 1953. Six months after he arrived on the island, it was swept by a devastating epidemic of poliomyelitis, which affected about 1,500 people.

Golding realised that this would leave a huge load of severely disabled people and, with this in mind, he began to organise the building of a rehabilitation centre in grounds near the University College Hospital. The Mona Rehabilitation Centre was put up swiftly, in spite of pouring rain. After the epidemic had died down, the need for the centre remained — to treat people paralysed in motor accidents or by gunshot wounds. It was a moving experience to visit the centre and talk to patients who had been there for thirty or forty years, but who were still visited by the "Prof" almost every day.

John Simon Rawson Golding was educated at Marlborough, Caius College, Cambridge, and the Middlesex Hospital, qualifying in 1944. Called up for National Service with the RAMC in 1946, he was posted to Tobruk, where he enjoyed being the only doctor within hundreds of miles. He returned to the Middlesex in 1948 and spent two years at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

In 1953 he accepted the post of senior lecturer in orthopaedic surgery at the newly

opened University College Hospital of the West Indies in Jamaica, seven miles outside Kingston. In 1965 he was promoted to the Princess Alice Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery at what had now been renamed the University Hospital, a post he held until retirement in 1983.

In 1956 he was one of five British orthopaedic surgeons who were invited to make a tour of the United States and Canada. He lectured in many different countries and visited Haiti to work no fewer than 16 times. He was a founder member of World Orthopaedic Concern and later its secretary-general. For his services to orthopaedics he was awarded the Order of Jamaica, the highest decoration that the country can give, and was knighted in 1986. He had been appointed OBE in 1959.

Two years ago he was elected to be chairman of the Commonwealth Caribbean Medical Research Council, an organisation which aims to promote and co-ordinate research within the region. Golding made a number of research contributions on subjects of particular interest in the Tropics, notably the bones

in sickle cell disease, tuberculosis of the spine and scoliosis. He was also instrumental in setting up the 1966 Commonwealth Paraplegic Games, from which the Jamaican team emerged loaded with gold medals — an enormous contribution to morale. Thereafter they took part in such contests all over the world.

Golding had a special feeling for children, and one of his first aims after the initial poliomyelitis epidemic was over was to set up a workshop for the construction of splints, crutches and eventually wheelchairs. Workshops were also established for woodwork and sewing, in order to provide occupation and to raise funds.

In later years Golding developed an interest in the hospice movement and in helping terminally ill cancer patients. He was also concerned about the increase in road accidents, and at the time of his death, after breathalysers had been introduced, was negotiating with the Jamaican Government about a legal requirement for seatbelts and crash helmets.

Behind all these practical activities there was another side to Golding. Three years ago he wrote a little book, *Ascend to Mona*, describing the development of medicine in Jamaica up to the time of the founding of the university. He was also passionately interested in the Renaissance.

Golding was a big man, physically and morally. He was known throughout Jamaica as "the gentle giant". His favourite maxim was: "The greatest of all mistakes is to do nothing because we can do so little." He spent the last morning of his life visiting five terminally ill cancer patients.

He leaves his wife Pat, a son and a daughter.

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ALDERMASTON MARCH ENDS

IN PROTEST OF SILENCE

The Aldermaston march of the nuclear disarmers ended in London last night with a "powerful protest of silence", as Canon Collins called it, outside the United States Embassy in Grosvenor Square. It was, in fact, well outside the embassy, for police had closed the west side of the square and a Ministry of Works ranger had cleared the garden of the square as early as 7 p.m. Instead of 8.30 p.m., much to the annoyance of citizens enjoying its holiday peace and quiet.

Thus the marchers were confined to three sides of the square — and to the pavements further from its garden at that — traffic being allowed to pass along the four roads. This, naturally enough, dimmed the silence of the protest somewhat. It took just over half an hour for the contingents taking part in this demonstration — a mere fraction of those who had assembled in Hyde Park — to take their places in Grosvenor Square.

Then, when all was set, Canon Collins, one of the organizers of the march, turned round the square in a large van, explaining through a loud speaker that the idea of the 10 minutes' silence was to make their protest to President Kennedy. Later he walked with Mr. John Horner, secretary of the Fire Brigades Union,

ON THIS DAY

April 24, 1962

The first Aldermaston March, organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, was in April 1958, a year after the testing of Britain's first H-bomb in the Pacific.

and two Labour M.P.s, Mr. Pavitt and Mr. Anthony Greenwood, to the entrance of the embassy, where they handed in a letter protesting against the United States proposal to resume nuclear tests. Similar letters of protest were delivered to the Russian Embassy and to Admiralty House.

As the party left the United States Embassy the scene was enlivened with flashlights from photographers' cameras and the assembled marchers burst into a long round of clapping. Police, who lined the square from about 7 p.m., received several coachloads of reinforcements during the evening, but they had little to do

beyond persuading people to keep on the pavements. By 8.30 the demonstration was over and the marchers began to disperse.

Yesterday morning the marchers set out from west London on the final leg of their four-day march. Two Japanese survivors of the nuclear attack on Hiroshima were at the head of the column. With them, apart from Canon Collins, were Professor Ritchie Calder, Miss Jacquetta Hawkes, wife of Mr. J. B. Priestley, Mr. Frank Cousins, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and several Labour M.P.s.

When the head of the column reached Hyde Park the tail was leaving Acton. According to the police, about 30,000 marched into the park. There waiting sympathisers and holiday-makers swelled the numbers to more than 50,000. Campaign leaders estimated there were even more, and Mr. Cousins put the number as high as 150,000.

Canon Collins, addressing the rally, said: "This is a magnificent response, a terrific concourse of people all determined to persuade Messrs. Macmillan, Gaiskill, and Grimond that they are not leading the British people where they ought to go. They always think the Aldermaston demonstration just a flash in the pan. I hope this rally will recognize it as a flash they cannot resist."

Laura Blair on contract caterers who have developed 'healthy' menus

With the BSE scare at its worst, Sutcliffe, the contract caterer, took beef off the menu — but only in prisons. All other clients were given freedom of choice: it is not the role of caterers, after all, to dictate what their clients eat.

They must, however, be aware of trends in diet, and at the moment the long-term change is towards healthier eating. Cream soups, fry-ups, meat starters, red meats and sticky puddings are slowly going the way of all flesh.

According to contract catering companies, "healthy options" involving less fat, salt, sugar, increased fibre and the clear labelling of the contents of dishes, increasingly form part of invitation-to-tender documents.

The recent refurbishment of the English National Opera's staff restaurant at the Coliseum, for example, was also taken by Gardner Merchant as a good opportunity to change the catering style. More emphasis has been placed on healthy food options, including salads and vegetarian dishes.

Ventilation in the restaurant, which is under the stage, was improved and the room made more spacious to make room for the singers' voluminous costumes — previously, they were not able to sit on the benches, which were very close to the tables and screwed to the floor.

Contract caterers in general pose the question: is it not absurd for employers to go to elaborate trouble to make workplaces hazard-free and healthy if the diet of those who work in them is neither?

Making food hazard-free means eliminating identifiable danger — including harmful additives and bacteria, maybe even the remote threat of CJD. Notions of what constitutes a healthy diet change constantly — but then so do notions of what constitutes "health". Not so long ago, health was equated with age-defying beauty. Now we again worry that some don't eat enough, while others eat too much.

Healthy eating programmes are often seen as part of a keep-fit corporate culture. For example, at Fina, the petroleum company, whose contract catering is by Summit, and at Hewlett-Packard (catering by Aramark), healthy eating is part of a corporate policy that includes regular exercise and health check-ups.

But much of the healthy eating drive is fuelled by widespread public disquiet about the long-term wholesomeness of what we eat, inspired by a series of well-publicised food scandals, and a growing distrust of scientific pronouncements.



Backstage meal: ENO technical staff, musicians and singers take a break from the opera *Fidelio*

A bite at the opera

More "natural" food is an established demand.

Nutritionists tend to play the science game with a straight bat, while still disputing the benefits of, among other things, fibre and cutting down on salt and sugar. But Anne Pawan, of Gardner Merchant's nutrition and dietetic services, insists that the uncertainties have been exaggerated.

She says: "There are still areas of doubt — but also conclusions which have not changed over the years. One is the need to cut down on fats." And the polyunsaturates (in some vegetable oils) are not the heroes they once were, the current preference being for monosaturates such as olive and fish and rapeseed oils. Here the caterers' healthy eating response is probably about right. To quote Sutcliffe: "Where

possible our food is grilled or roasted rather than fried."

But eating is only partly about nourishment. Mostly it is about pleasure. Ms Pawan's advice to chefs is to "use salt lightly; but not so lightly that it will encourage people to sprinkle their food with salt themselves. The same with sugar: reduce it but the food must still be palatable."

Healthy eating is a balance between instinctive and acquired wisdom. A little of what you fancy then... and it is the gourmet, not the starkly scientific approach which is the order of the day. For example, Compass launched its first healthy eating programme as far back as 1983, but the recipes had been prepared by nutritionists, not the chefs, so they didn't work terribly well. Anne Turner, the

project manager of Eures (part of the Compass Group), says: "Today we train the chefs in nutrition."

Virtually every contract caterer today has a healthy eating programme. The aim is to give customers what they want. The method is to give everyone an extensive choice — even fish and chips alongside non-fried fish dishes — and plenty of encouragement via point-of-sale publicity, colour codes, signage, and lots of information about the contents of dishes.

Ingrained tastes and aversions don't disappear overnight, but they do change. Today brown rice has few takers in Britain — but a generation ago lager held the same position. Caterers say that part of the value of clearly identifying ingredients is to prepare consumers mentally for lower salt or sugar in dishes.

The trend, meanwhile, is to have a core package of specifically healthy recipes, especially favouring Mediterranean cuisine because it is naturally low in fat and high in fibre and starch. This is coupled with good practice in ingredient selection and cooking methods, using lean meat, unblended oils, avoidance of deep frying and crème fraîche instead of cream.

Beware the phoney copier consultants

Copying costs are falling — but they could be cut even further

A significant drop in the cost of reprographics in the first three months of the year is the biggest change in office costs recorded by the quarterly Times/Procord survey.

The introduction of new and more competitive photocopier contracts, plus the growing popularity of all-purpose machines providing computer printouts, photocopies and fax facilities, are responsible for the reduction.

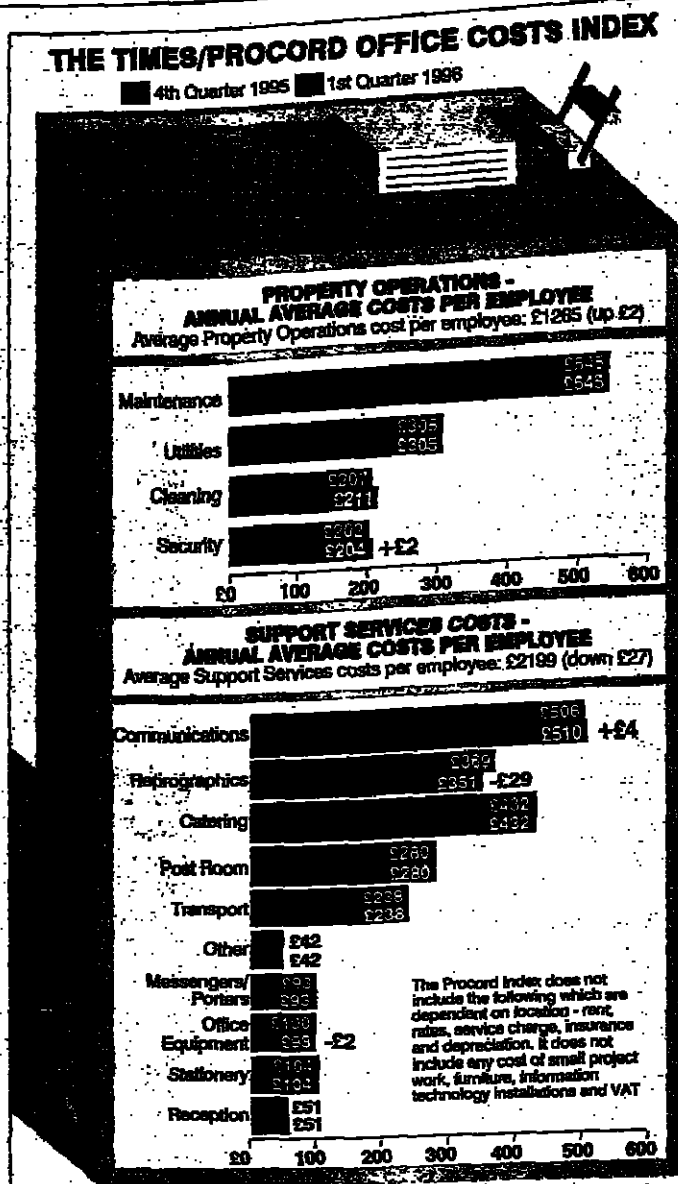
The change has brought annual office costs per employee down to £3,656; £25 less than in the final quarter of last year. But property management costs have remained static.

Barry Varcoe, Procord's international performance manager, says: "The boom time for the photocopier industry was the mid-1980s, when businesses were so eager to hire the latest equipment that they landed themselves with onerous and expensive contracts. Now that the contracts are expiring, companies can negotiate more favourable terms, especially as there are a number of surplus suppliers in the market."

The most dramatic example discovered during the survey of 250 office buildings around Britain was the replacement of a £14,000-a-year contract for the provision of two copiers by one for £6,500 which included new machines.

The reduction in costs could have been greater but for the activities of "strippers", according to the Business Equipment Users' Association. Carmel Rowley, the association's director, says that these unqualified photocopy sales people, who present themselves as "copier consultants", are preying on business worries about the industry's prices.

They claim to know "the tricks of the trade" and offer to extricate customers from contracts. But often they end up pocketing



large fees — for minimal work.

The drop in reprographic costs found in The Times/Procord survey was partly offset by an increase in communication charges, which is attributed to the growing use of mobile telephones, faxes and other information technology devices.

Mr. Varcoe also claims that cleaning and security costs could soon rise because of concerted pressure from companies supplying these services to raise their charges.

He says: "Cleaning and security staff will come from the same supply pool within the catchment area of an office, so contractors will be under pressure to match wages offered by their rivals. They will find it difficult to undercut those seeking more lucrative deals."

"The best way for a business to react to these pressures is to demand that staff carry out extra duties, such as manning the

reception desk, or that they obtain other skills, such as first aid qualifications."

Mr. Varcoe advises companies looking at their security costs to avoid the temptation of comparing their figures with other companies. "The provision of effective security is more complicated than that," he says. "The starting point must be a risk assessment, which needs to consider the specific risks of the industry in which the company is engaged, the location of premises and less obvious dangers, such as the possibility of flood or a road tanker that is carrying chemicals crashing into the site."

"A company can then work out the most effective way of doing the job. Employing lots of guards might not be the answer because just one or two men might be able to monitor effective intruder systems and raise the alarm."

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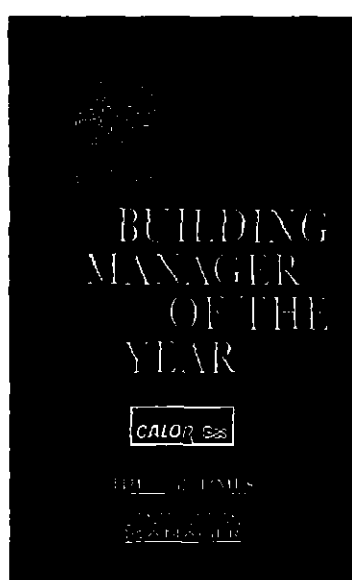
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Charities warned to beware lottery advisers

Master fixer

With a building of 215,000 sq ft used by more than 2,000 people a day to look after, with cleaning and maintenance contracts to supervise, sports fields and science laboratories to keep in action, Raymond Gunn seems a typical facilities manager. He is practising his profession, however, in a field where FM is virtually unknown: education. Mr Gunn is premises manager at Crown Woods comprehensive in Eltham, southeast London, and was one of the first school managers to become a member of the British Institute of Facilities Management.

As concern grows about the physical state of Britain's schools in a cash-starved environment, his skills are going to be needed. Yet the opportunity for FM companies, as opposed to managers, to move into the school market remains almost nil because of VAT.

Educational establishments must pay the tax for any outside services, so if they outsource the management of their premises they will have

Tony Dawe assesses the skills needed to run schools as a business

to pay an extra 17.5 per cent. If they call in an electrician, they pay VAT; if they use a staff employee, they don't.

The tax problem makes it difficult for FM companies to offer schools a complete management package at a competitive price but there are some services they could provide more cheaply even after tax is paid," says Howard Bibby, property consultant for Procord.

The need for professional help is paramount. A survey by the two local government associations found an "appalling level of neglect" in school maintenance, with a £3.2 billion backlog in repairs.

"With increasing parental choice, schools are having to

complete for pupils and are concentrating on better teaching and equipment," says Mr Bibby. "Yet if a school goes for two to three years with inadequate maintenance, by the fourth it will not be functioning at all."

Proof of this can be found in London boroughs and many cities. At Islington Green School, north London, for example, lack of maintenance led to the breakdown of the boilers and closure of the school on three days when cold weather struck.

Mr Gunn is familiar with the problem. The formula used by the London borough of Greenwich to assess the maintenance budget for Crown Woods means that the school is entitled to £120,000 a year, but half of that is channelled into more direct educational spending by the school governors.

As a result, he has become an expert in getting value for money. "We have to think of the most cost-efficient solution to everything," he says. "I employ a carpenter four days a week at £60 a day and a



Raymond Gunn, outside Crown Woods School in southeast London, has become an expert in getting value for money

plumber at £80 a day, which is much cheaper than calling in contractors and paying the VAT when a job needs doing. He must decide when more major works, like external

painting and repairing water tanks, become essential. He supervises cleaning, ground maintenance and furniture contracts. In addition, he arranges lettings of the school

and its sports facilities, which brings in £25,000 a year. "You can see why I hate being called a caretaker!" he says.

"Schools must learn to run their premises as a business,"

adds Mr Bibby. "If they cannot afford to outsource the management, they can at least seek advice about setting up the right structure and assessment from FM professionals."

IN BRIEF

Tupe or not Tupe?

ST ALBANS council's dispute with MRS, a maintenance company, over redundancy payments for 17 workers is approaching the litigation stage: the council has taken advice from a QC. The outcome could affect the Tupe - Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations. "The losers will be the staff involved," says Norman Rose, new director-general of the Business Services Association.

□ AHS Emstar has been awarded a three-year contract to maintain 99 Bishopsgate, a 26-storey office tower damaged in 1993 by the IRA bomb. The building, owned by Hammerson (UK) Properties, has had a £65 million refurbishment.

□ PRUE Redfern, former business development manager for Procord, has joined the Symonds Group as FM marketing director.

□ COMPANIES have until December 31 to comply with new display screen regulations. These stipulate "an adequate level of humidity", without which VDUs can cause dry eyes and throats, and other ills. The Air Improvement Centre offers a helpline: 0171 834 2834.

□ PALL MALL services group has been awarded a five-year catering and domestic services contract at St Ann's Hospital, Haringey.

□ ARDINGTON Archives, of Wantage, south Oxfordshire, are encouraging companies to outsource their archive files, freeing office space for more valuable use. A box of dusty records can be kept for as little as 1p a day.

□ REMOTE meetings, created by Electronic Environments, is claimed to be a new concept in communication: it combines video conferencing with document conferencing.

□ MORE than 6,250 visitors attended FM Expo at Olympia last month, a record. Winner of the Mitie press prize for best coverage was POFM magazine.



Home and dry: Sara Collins at work with the coastguard service in Scotland

Stephen Hoare on the FM manager who goes to work by boat or helicopter

A wet suit is not everyone's idea of what the well-dressed facilities manager should be wearing, but Chesterton's Sara Collins slips one on when she visits one of her more remote assignments - a coastguard station on lonely Rathlin Island off the Northern Irish coast.

Rathlin is one of 300 properties in Northern Ireland, Scotland and the North East of England that Chesterton manages for HM Coastguard. Responsible for maintenance, Miss Collins co-ordinates inspection visits by surveyors to operations centres, equipment stores and coastguard cottages from the firm's Edinburgh office.

For Rathlin, the visit entails a 20-minute trip out to the island in a rigid inflatable power boat. Luckily, the sea was calm. But that sort of journey is not unusual in the remote highlands and islands where many coastguard

properties are often best visited by helicopter, plane or ferry.

Miss Collins plans HM Coastguard's entire northern regional maintenance programme, managing an annual budget of roughly £500,000. She meets coastguard managers at the service's eight district offices once a quarter to approve repairs and review a planned maintenance programme.

Chesterton has for the last three years been steadily building an FM presence north of the border. Clients now include the Scottish Office, a chain of six government marine laboratories, Scottish Natural Heritage and Shell Oil.

HM Coastguard is happy outsourcing its FM. In the past maintenance and building work was handled through the old government Property Services Agency and by the individual coastguard managers themselves.

Bob Driver, controller for the north east of Scotland, says: "We used to divide up our maintenance budget between the districts for them to spend as they thought fit. Sometimes managers had spare cash left over at the end of the year and spent willy nilly - other times money for essential repairs ran out."

The most important part of Chesterton's maintenance brief is to keep the operations centres fully functioning at all

times. Manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year they play a key role in co-ordinating emergency services - not just the coastguards themselves but RNLI lifeboats and MoD air-sea rescue helicopters.

This means keeping the power supply on at all times - not an easy task in exposed coastal areas where storms can bring down overhead power lines. Miss Collins explains: "All these stations have back-up diesel generators and batteries to ensure an uninterrupted power supply."

For Chesterton, this means setting up and supervising contracts with specialist mechanical and electrical contractors to make regular and frequent checks of equipment, making sure it will work when needed.

Mr Driver says: "Any time we ask them to do something we get a response immediately which was something we never used to get in the past."

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Shipowners cannot invoke clause

The Mahikutsai

Before Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Jauncey of Tullichettle, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead, Lord Hoffmann and Sir Michael Hardie Boys

[Judgment April 22]

Shipowners, who were not parties to the contract in the bill of lading issued by time charterers to the shipper, could not invoke, either under a Himalaya clause (see *Adler v Dickson* [1955] 1 QB 138) incorporated into the bill of lading or alternatively on the principle of bailment on terms, as against the cargo owners the exclusive jurisdiction clause contained in that contract.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council so held in dismissing an appeal by the appellants, the owners of the Indonesian vessel *Mahikutsai*, from the judgment of the Court of Appeal of Hong Kong [1994] 1 HKLR 212 setting aside the order of Mr Justice Seares, who had granted them a stay of proceedings brought in Hong Kong by the respondents, the owners of cargo lately laden on the vessel.

Mr Peter Gross, QC and Mr Duncan Neithewes for the shipowners; Mr Richard Alken, QC and Mr Alan Roxburgh for the cargo owners.

LORD GOFF said the shipowners had chartered the vessel to another Indonesian corporation, PT Rejeki Sentosa, which had subchartered it to the shipper for the carriage of a cargo of plywood from Jakarta to Stanton in the People's Republic of China.

A shipping order was issued by Sentosa's form. Clause 4(f) provided, inter alia, that every "servant, agent and subcontractor" of the carrier Sentosa shall have the benefit of all exceptions, limitations, provisions, conditions and liberties herein benefiting the carrier as if such provisions were expressly made for their benefit, and, in entering into this contract, the carrier, to the extent of those provisions, does so not only on [his] own behalf, but also as agent and trustee for such servants, agents and subcontractors.

Clause 19 provided: "The contract evidenced by the bill of lading shall be governed by the law of Indonesia and any dispute arising hereunder shall be determined by the Indonesian courts according to that law to the exclusion of the jurisdiction of the courts of any other country."

When the vessel arrived at Stanton the cargo owners claimed that plywood in one of the holds had been damaged by sea water. The vessel proceeded to Hong Kong for the discharge of other cargo. On arrival there the cargo owners issued a writ claiming damages arising from damage to the cargo. The shipowners issued a summons seeking a stay of proceedings.

Mr Justice Seares held that the shipowners, although not parties to the bill, were entitled to invoke clause 19 either as a contractual term or as one of the terms on which the goods were bailed to them, and he ordered that the Hong Kong proceedings be stayed. The Court of Appeal by a majority reversed that decision.

The two principles which the shipowners invoked were the product of developments in English law during the present century. During that period, opinion had fluctuated about the desirability of recognising some form of modification of, or exception to, the strict doctrine of privity of contract to accommodate situations which arose in the context of carriage of goods by sea, in which it appeared to be in accordance with commercial expectations that the benefit of certain terms of the contract of carriage should be made available to parties involved in the adventure who were not parties to the contract.

Those cases had been concerned primarily with stevedores claiming the benefit of exceptions and limitations in bills of lading, but also with shipowners claiming the protection of such terms contained in charterparty bills.

At first there appeared to have been a readiness on the part of judges to recognise such claims, especially in *Elder Dempster & Co Ltd v Paterson Zochonis & Co Ltd* [1924] AC 522, concerned with the principle of bailment on terms. Opinion, however, hardened against them in the middle of the century as the pendulum swung back in the direction of orthodoxy in *Midland Silicones Ltd v Scruttons Ltd* [1962] AC 446; but in more recent years it had swung back again in recognition of their commercial desirability: see *New Zealand Shipping Co Ltd v A.M. Satterthwaite & Co Ltd* (The *Eurymedon*) [1975] AC 154 and *Port Jackson Stevedoring Pty Ltd v Salmond & Spraggon (Australia) Pty Ltd* (The *New York Star*) [1981] 1 WLR 138.

In the present case shipowners carrying cargo shipped under charterparty bills of lading were seeking to claim the benefit of a Himalaya clause, called after the name of the ship in *Adler v Dickson*, in the bills, or in the

alternative to invoke the principle of bailment on terms.

However, they were seeking to invoke not an exception or limitation in the ordinary sense of those words, but the benefit of an exclusive jurisdiction clause. That would involve a significantly wider application of the relevant principles.

His Lordship said that so long as the *Eurymedon* principle continued to be understood to rest upon an enforceable contract as between the cargo owners and the stevedores entered into through the agency of the shipowner, it was inevitable that technical points of contract and agency law would continue to be invoked by cargo owners seeking to enforce tortious remedies against stevedores and others uninvolved by the exceptions and limitations in the relevant bill of lading contract.

There was a helpful consideration of the principle in *Palmer on Bailment* (2nd edition (1991) pp1610-1625).

There could be no doubt of the commercial need of some such principle and not only in cases concerned with stevedores; and the bold step taken by the Privy Council in *The Eurymedon* and later developed in *The New York Star*, had been widely welcomed. But it was legitimate to wonder whether that development was yet complete. The time might well come when, in an appropriate case, it would fall to be considered whether the courts should take what might legitimately be perceived to be the final, and perhaps inevitable, step in that development, and recognise in those cases a fully fledged exception to the doctrine of privity of contract, thus escaping from all the technicalities which courts were now faced in English law.

Their Lordships had given consideration to the question whether they should face up to that question in the present appeal but had come to the conclusion that it would not be appropriate for them to do so.

Their Lordships turned to the application of the principle in *The Eurymedon* to the facts of the present case and proceeded to address the question of the exclusive jurisdiction clause on the assumption that the shipowners could be regarded as subcontractors for that purpose. The question was whether that clause fell within the scope of clause 4(f), the Himalaya clause.

In *The Eurymedon* (at p169) and *The New York Star* (at p143) Lord Wilberforce stated the principle to be applicable, in the case of stevedores, to respectively "exceptions and limitations" and "defences and immunities" contained in the bill of lading.

That was scarcely surprising. Most bill of lading contracts

incorporated the Hague-Visby Rules, in which the responsibilities and liabilities of the carrier were segregated from his rights and immunities. Such terms were characteristically terms for the benefit of the carrier, of which subcontractors could have the benefit under the Himalaya clause as if such terms were expressly made for their benefit.

It, however, by no means followed that the same could be said of an exclusive jurisdiction clause. Such a clause could be distinguished from terms such as exceptions and limitations in that it did not benefit only one party, but embodied a mutual agreement under which both parties agreed with each other as to the relevant jurisdiction for the resolution of disputes.

It created mutual rights and obligations. Could such a clause be an exception, limitation, provision, condition or liberty benefiting the carrier within the meaning of the Himalaya clause?

It could not be an exception, limitation, condition or liberty. But could it be a provision?

That expression had to be considered in the context of the Himalaya clause, and so the question was whether an exclusive jurisdiction clause was a provision benefiting the carrier, of which servants, agents and subcontractors of the carrier were intended to have the benefit, as if the provision was expressly made for their benefit.

The word "provision" was to be found at the centre of a series of words, all of which shared the same characteristic, that they were not so much rights which entitled correlative obligations on the cargo owners.

Some limit had to be placed upon the meaning of "provision" in that context. It must have been inserted with the purpose of ensuring that any other provision in the bill of lading which, although it did not strictly fall within the description "exceptions, limitations, ..."

benefited the carrier in the same way in the bill for the carrier's protection, should ensure for the benefit of servants, agents and subcontractors of the carrier.

It could not therefore extend to include a mutual agreement, such as an exclusive jurisdiction clause, which was not of that character.

In support of his submission that the exclusive jurisdiction clause fell within the scope of the Himalaya clause in the present case, Mr Gross had invited the decision of the Privy Council in *The Pioneer Container* [1994] 2 AC 324.

That case was, however, concerned with a different situation and their Lordships did not find it of assistance in the present case. The Himalaya clause did not

enable the shipowners to take advantage of the exclusive jurisdiction clause in the bill of lading.

In the light of the principle established by Lord Sumner in *The Elder Dempster* case (at p504), as interpreted in *Wilson v Darling Island Stevedoring and Lightage Co Ltd* [1956] 95 CLR 43, 78, the next question was whether the shipowners could establish that they had received the goods into their possession on the terms of the bill of lading, including the exclusive jurisdiction clause; that is, whether the shipowners' obligations as bailees were effectively subjected to the clause as a term upon which the shipowners implicitly received the goods into their possession: see *The Pioneer Container* (at p340).

In the present case there was an insuperable objection to the argument of the shipowners. That was that the bill of lading under which the goods were shipped on board contained a Himalaya clause under which the shipowners as subcontractors were expressed to be entitled to the benefit of certain terms in the bill of lading but, as their Lordships had held, those terms did not include the exclusive jurisdiction clause.

In those circumstances it was impossible to say that, by receiving the goods into their possession pursuant to the bill of lading, the shipowners' obligations as bailees were effectively subjected to the exclusive jurisdiction clause as a term upon which they implicitly received the goods into their possession. Any such implication had to be rejected as inconsistent with the express terms of the bill of lading.

Accordingly, their Lordships recommended that the appeal should be dismissed.

Solicitors: Sinclair Roche Temperley; Crump & Co.

Judge's power to choose scale of costs

Brown v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis
White v Saine

Before Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Pill

[Judgment April 3]

An action claiming damages for false imprisonment, assault and malicious prosecution was "an action for the recovery of a sum of money only" within the meaning of Order 38, rule 4 of the County Court Rules 1981 which applied in determining the scale of costs to be awarded. It did not, however, exclude the county court judge's overriding discretion under Order 38, rule 1(2), to determine the scale appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

The Court of Appeal so held, dismissing an appeal by Roy Brown and Janet White, plaintiffs in consolidated actions, from Judge Sir David Hughes-Morgan, who at Croydon County Court had awarded them costs on county court scale 1 in respect of their actions against the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Mr Brown had claimed damages for assault and battery, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. He was awarded damages in respect of the greater part of his claim of £27,500. Miss White had succeeded on her claim for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution and obtained damages of £3,000. Both sought costs on county court scale 2.

Order 38, rule 1 provides: "(2) The costs of and incidental to all proceedings in a county court shall be in the discretion of the court." Rule 4 provides: "(1) ... the scale of costs in an action for the

recovery of a sum of money only shall be determined — (a) as regards the costs of the plaintiff, by the amount recovered; (b) as regards the defendant, by the amount claimed."

Mr Patrick O'Connor for the plaintiffs; Mr Simon Freedland for the commissioner.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that Mr O'Connor's first argument that since the actions had been transferred from the High Court, the judge had failed to give effect to a wider discretion conferred by section 45 of the County Courts Act 1984, was not open to him as he had invited the judge to deal with the matter as if it had been in the county court throughout.

Even if it were, it would not have helped him. *Hayles v West* [1940] 1 KB 250, which followed *Davies v Davies* [1928] 1 KB 364, was clear authority for the proposition that the discretion given to the court in relation to transferred actions did not have the effect of giving the county court judge any wider discretion as to costs than he would have in relation to an action originating in the county court.

Mr O'Connor's second submission was that Order 38, rule 4 did not apply since the actions were not for the recovery of a sum of money only; that the plaintiffs' objectives included the vindication of their reputations and went beyond the mere recovery of monetary damages; and that, even if rule 4(1)(a) could be operated where the plaintiff was successful, rule 4(1)(b) could not where the plaintiff was unsuccessful since no amount had been claimed and therefore there was nothing by

which the scale of costs recoverable by the defendant could be fixed. His Lordship rejected that argument, accepting that of Mr Freedland: that rule 4 applied to actions for unliquidated damages: see *The County Court Rules* 1981 paragraph 3, note 3 of Part II of the scale, at p1665 and the note to Order 3, rule 2, at p136; and that there was no difficulty in operating rule 4(1)(b) since either the plaintiff would have limited his claim, so that there would be an amount claimed, or he would not, in which case it would be treated as unlimited and so for a sum of more than £3,000.

His Lordship had no doubt at all that Order 38, rule 4 applied in cases of the present kind essentially for those reasons. It was an action for recovery of a sum of money only since nothing else was sought.

He accepted Mr O'Connor's third submission that if Order 38, rule 4 did apply the judge was wrong to hold that he was bound to apply the appropriate scale, and that he was deprived of discretion to depart from it even if he thought it right to do so.

Mr O'Connor had not submitted that the cases fell within rule 4(8), but he had relied on *Bourne v Stanbridge* [1951] 1 WLR 189 as clear authority for the proposition that the overriding discretion conferred by Order 38, rule 1(2) was not excluded by the terms of rule 4. Referring to that case, in particular at pp193, 196 and 197, his Lordship said that the Court of Appeal had there been called off to consider rules equivalent to those now contained in Order 38, rules 1(2), 3(1), 3(3), 4(1) and 4(6).

The effect of the decision was that, despite the language of what was now Order 38, rule 4, the county court judge did retain an overriding discretion.

The judge had misdirected himself in holding that he had no discretion; however he had not further misdirected himself in ruling that if he had a discretion, an award on scale 1 was appropriate.

In dismissing the appeal the Lordship agreed with Lord Justice Gibson's observations on Order 38, rule 9.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON, agreeing, said that under scale 1 could in certain circumstances be increased if the provisions of Order 38, rule 9 were invoked. It was therefore still possible that the plaintiffs would recover more than the costs allowed under scale 1.

Lord Justice Pill delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Michael E. Harris, Hampstead; Knock & Foskett, Sevenoaks.

Challenging directors' decision

Popey v Planarive Ltd

Before Mr Justice Laddie

[Judgment March 28]

When the court was asked to set aside the exercise by directors of a private company of deliberately wide powers bestowed on them by its articles of association, it was necessary to prove that they had acted outside those powers.

Mr Justice Laddie so held in the Chancery Division in refusing an application by Ronald Popey, under section 359 of the Companies Act 1985, for an order requiring the register of members of Planarive Ltd by registering him as the owner of 15 shares which had validly been transferred to him by his son, Darren.

Article 14 of the company's articles empowered its directors "in their absolute discretion and without assigning any reason

thereof" to "decline to register the transfer of a share".

Article 25 provided: "If the directors refuse to register a transfer of a share, they shall within two months after the date on which the transfer was lodged send to the transferee notice of the refusal."

Miss Catherine Newman, QC and Mr S. Graham Campbell for the applicant; Miss Tina Kyriakides for the company.

MR JUSTICE LADDIE said it was not in dispute that the combined effect of those articles was that a decision to refuse to register had to be taken within those two months, and he was not prepared to disbelieve sworn evidence that such a decision had, at a timely directors' meeting, been taken.

Nor was it in dispute that, in breach of article 25, no timely notice of that decision had been

sent to Mr Popey, whose counsel had contended that such breach rendered that decision void. His Lordship disagreed: that breach might expose the directors to civil or criminal liabilities, but could not relate back so as to nullify a decision which had been proper.

Counsel had further contended that the directors had been unable validly to take that decision, by virtue of strong personal feelings of hostility towards Mr Popey, but no such feelings could, per se, bar a director from taking an otherwise valid decision.

Where a power to decide was, as in article 14, unqualified, the only restriction on a director was that he must act bona fide in the company's interests.

Solicitors: Michael E. Harris, Hampstead; Knock & Foskett, Sevenoaks.

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Shock horror hits the Sunday doormat

Giles Coren reports on why a respectable newspaper broke new ground in taste

When the *Sunday Express* dropped on to the doormats of middle England last weekend, its readers were enjoying the sunniest morning of the year so far. By the time the front page had been unfolded, stormclouds were gathering.

"A bunch of shits," screamed the headline, in letters nearly two inches high, the first time the word, or any like it, had appeared in such a prominent position in a British newspaper. The quote was attributed to the Prime Minister, part of a tirade against other European leaders and leaked to the paper by a senior Tory source to toughen up John Major's image. The word had the Downing Street imprimatur, certainly, but its size and position were totally unexpected.

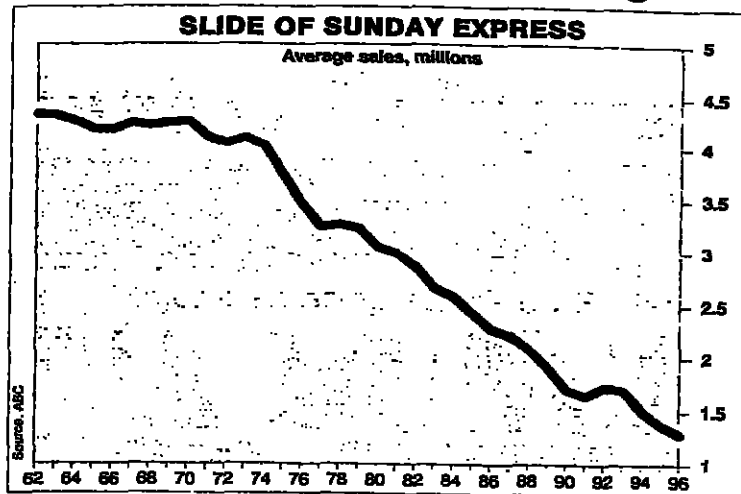
But the Editor Sue Douglas was unrepentant. "Of course we were worried about the possible response," she said. "And a few people thought we shouldn't do it, including some of the younger journalists, with very young children. But we ran it because it is what he said. It is not so long ago that all the papers were running the bastards' story. And was shit really

so much worse as a word? It had been seen in print before, although admittedly not in a 140-point banner headline. But it crystallized the point, and made the story stronger."

The Editor of the *News of the World*, Phil Hall, was in no mood for excuses. "It was outrageous," he said. "We would never carry a headline like that. And coming from Britain's most outrageous newspaper, that is saying something."

"I was news editor on the *Sunday Express* and I know that the shockwaves will be reverberating around middle England. My mother told me she would be cancelling her order immediately, and I don't think she will be alone. You should be able to leave a Sunday newspaper on the coffee table all day. People do not want their children coming up to them saying, 'What is a bunch of shits, Daddy?' You can put the words in the copy, where adults can choose to read about an adult subject, but in the headline it is going to be read on news-stands, and, again, children will read it."

There were, indeed, problems on the news-stands. Journalists at the *Sunday Express* told of worried



phone calls from newsagents putting up bill-boards, who assumed there had been a mistake.

But according to Roy Farndon, Editor of *UK Press Gazette*, it was no accident. "Nor was it a case of 'Can we get away with this headline?'" he says. "This was a deliberate attempt, made after consultation, to appeal to a younger audience. They decided on the message they wanted to send about the paper, and then looked for a way to send it."

"It was a brave move for an editor

to make, but the trick is to appeal to new readers without alienating older ones."

"Of course we are hell-bent on getting younger readers," says Ms Douglas. "Everyone knows that. But we have an image problem, and need to be noticed more. That was part of the decision. I felt as if I was on the edge of a diving-board all day, and I just thought, 'Oh, go on, jump.' I spoke to Lord Stevens before I did it. He said he would support me."

She insists that the objectors have

been few. "We have taken 57 calls so far," she says. "Thirty six were appalled, 16 were cancelling their subscriptions, and five were just praising the sentiments." Not enough to sway Ms Douglas. She will, she says, be doing it again, but admits that "shit" was a borderline case, and that the *Express* will go no further.

It seems that sales did increase by 11,000 on Sunday. But people rarely begin cancelling before the newsagents' bill comes in. Since the *Sunday Express* has the highest pre-ordered sale (as much as 30 per cent) of any paper in Britain, this will be crucial.

Cynics insist that Douglas, with only a year to show an improvement in circulation, is resorting to desperate methods. It is also seen as significant that the paper's owners, United Newspapers, recently merged with MAI, which is owned by Labour peer Lord Hollick. Prudish United chairman Lord Stevens, it is said, would not have sanctioned this in his days of total autonomy.

One man who was not ruffled was Sir John Junor, Editor of the *Sunday Express* until 1988. "It is a fairly appropriate description," he said. "I wouldn't have used it in my day, but then Europe has changed. Shit is common parlance now, and you should speak in the language of the people."

Must try harder

From all over the world, curious bureaucrats come to London to see the miracle on Foley Street: commercial television forced to perform uncommercial acts. In most other countries, commercial TV consists of non-stop advertisements broken by game shows, old movies and cartoons.

This morning, the Independent Television Commission will give its annual demonstration in regulating when it pronounces judgment on the performance of those television services under its thumb: ITV, Channel 4, GMTV and Teletext UK.

If leaks are true, the ITC is going to tell the 15 regional companies which form ITV (or Channel 3) to try harder to serve their regions as well as the national network. And it probably will get results, as it did two years ago when it told Carlton and GMTV that they ought to be ashamed of the poor quality of what they offered the network.

There is no mystery on how the ITC does it. The commission, through Parliament, holds the power to give and take away licences, and to award and fine those licence-holders who do not meet their public-service obligations. But no regulatory agency can be better than the law it is given to enforce. The Broadcasting Act of 1990 was a mess. The stipulation that ITV licences be auctioned to the highest bidder worked against the public interest. The ITV network has to draw big audiences to please its advertisers. The 15 companies have to pay £400 million a year to the Treasury as a consequence of their auction bids. That money should be going into programmes, not to the Treasury. But even if amendments to the new Broadcasting Bill, after 1997, make this possible don't expect to be seeing the likes of Dennis Potter's work on ITV. Regulation cannot relieve ITV companies of their prime obligation — to reward their shareholders.

Trevor McDonald's Better English Campaign is, like the best campaigns, preaching to the converted. So how to reach "them" — the young who prefer the guttural grunt? By concentrating on the workplace, says the campaign. A host of friendly organisations and voices will argue the case that a better job — or, at least, a job, or a more attentive hearing from the bank or building society — is the reward for fluency. Tactfully, the campaign, even though backed by the

Department for Education and Employment, is ignoring the education system entirely. But the classroom is where the problem lies. There's no substituting "effective communication skills" for grammar. How can you put sentences together properly if you don't know the parts and how to assemble them? The national curriculum leaves grammar and syntax until the age of 14 to 16. By then it's too late.

Pupils in primary schools need to know the difference between singular and plural, a noun and a verb, and between "a white man's shirt" and "a man's white shirt". Whenever purity of language comes up, American-English comes in for a lot of stick. American films and sitcoms certainly promote the verbless sentence, as in "I'm, like, outta there," for "I left in a hurry". But American-English is just an early form of globalised English — a basic common denominator language forged by people for whom English is not the mother



BRENDA MADDOX

tongue. The perplexing differences between American and British journalism were aired entertainingly last week at a conference held by the University of London's Institute of United States Studies. Many reasons were offered to explain why American journalism is solemner and the British cheeky. But no one pointed out that the two forms of journalism use English in entirely different ways. In a nation of immigrants, irony does not go a long way, nor does the subjunctive. Neither do punning slogans like "Go to Work on an Egg". Trevor McDonald and his well-wishers have embarked on a hard task. There is not just to teach simple English but standard English, based on rules, keeping pure the well-spring which the rest of the world will dilute to its taste.

The romance between BBC and the paranormal continues. The BBC's staff magazine *Ariel* reports in its news round-up of April 16 that a long series of unusual events at BBC Inverness have prompted an investigation by psychic Daphne Ploughman. After studying various phenomena — sightings of a woman in grey, possibly in mourning; unexplained screams; and the sound of heavy footsteps going through a closed door — Ms Ploughman concluded that the BBC building is one of "great psychic activity, which has possibly been disturbed by recent decorating work". Undoubtedly a BBC commissioning editor is already on his or her way.

Keep politics out of vaudeville

Roy Hattersley believes that politicians should refuse to play the TV soundbite game

Do not tell me that television compensates for the shortcomings of newspapers by allowing politicians to speak directly to the people. I believed that once. But that was before I spent hours of my life on Palace Green somewhere between the Henry Moore sculpture and a nervous breakdown.

Let me remind you what happens there. The reporter asks the politician to describe the new policy as briefly as possible. The politician responds to the request and is told that his statement was admirable in every way — but slightly too long. He tries again but still exceeds his ten seconds. Arguments about the problems of compression are met with the invincible but infuriating explanation that the news bulletin is barely 20 minutes long, only five minutes will be devoted to politics, two political subjects must be covered, other parties must have their say, and each participant has to be identified. "So, when we're doing the recording, will you walk towards the camera for an establishing shot?" Do not tell me that television makes up for the inadequacy of newspaper coverage of serious politics.

Indeed, in this week when *Panorama* officially became a chat show, it is easy to argue that television accelerates rather than holds back the increasing inclination to confuse politics and vaudeville. Too many television and radio commentators see themselves as personalities in their own right — performing to their own following. This is not a criticism of the tough interview — about which only the feeblest of politicians complain. Humphrys and Naughtie actually do encourage politicians to talk about serious issues. But some commentators think of

themselves as partners in a double act — with the politicians as straight men feeding them the punch lines. My example of that syndrome comes from the work of Jeremy Paxman — who (let me say in case vengeance is suspected) always treats me with a courtesy which makes me fear that I have become too old and frail to bully. He was not so kind a month ago to Emma Nicholson.

The doctrine of the mandate and the manifesto is inconsistent with a Member of Parliament who has been elected as the nominee of one party changing allegiance without resigning and fighting a by-election. During the week that Miss Nicholson left the Tory party and joined the Liberals, she was interviewed on *Newsnight*. Indeed she was interviewed on everything. But I foolishly hoped that *Newsnight* would be the programme that asked her to comment on the constitutional propriety of being elected on the promise to cut taxes and then voting to increase them. Instead, Mr Paxman quoted some of Miss Nicholson's criticism of Conservatism and then asked: "Why don't you come clean and admit it for what it was, pure opportunism?"

Long ago, some of us were taught that the only questions that have any meaning are those which are susceptible to more than one answer. But I doubt if even Mr Paxman hoped for Miss Nicholson to answer: "Fair cop, gov. You've got me bang to rights. I am a cynical opportunist." He was performing. And in her solemn rejection of the accusation, Miss Nicholson was performing too. The result was vaudeville — with Mr Paxman as star and Miss Nicholson as full supporting cast. Showbiz is no alternative to sensible debate.

The media game will reduce Labour's chances of winning



When Emma Nicholson defected to the Liberals Jeremy Paxman failed to ask the important constitutional questions

That is why I felt so strongly this week that Labour's local government campaign launch should not have begun with a recording of the Tory party chairman losing his temper on the radio accompanied by staged laughter from the party's media advisers. In the long run, Labour is not going to win elections because of the inadequate personality of its opponents. It is going to win because of the superiority of its policies. And the more the party co-operates in the media game, the more the media game will reduce its chances of winning.

I base that firm conclusion around the single word "gaffe". It seems to me that what both Clare Short and John Prescott said last week about taxation was of absolutely no political significance. Both comments

were blown up into stories in part because of the instinctive malice of some newspapers. But Labour's reluctance to talk about tax provided them with the opportunity. Nobody in their right mind expects an announcement of tax rates. Indeed, one of my few parliamentary successes was when I asked Geoffrey Howe what the standard rate would be if his party won the election and he told me it was the most stupid question he had ever heard. It was a question which Kenneth Baker had asked Labour to answer at five consecutive press conferences. The rule still holds good. But that is not the same as arguing against a bold statement of

general principles. Where Labour leaves a vacuum, all the tricks and connivances of a basically arcane system are used to the party's disadvantage, including the last refuge of desperate sub-editors, a headline that proclaims another gaffe. There are immense dangers for radical parties in becoming enmeshed in the arcane game that characterises the relationship between politicians and political journalists. We can, in the short term, believe ourselves to be super-professional — contradicting their errors of fact, refuting their malicious allegations and making cutting off-the-record criticisms of colleagues



Showbiz is no alternative to sensible debate

An edited extract from the James Cameron Memorial Lecture in London last night.

Readers switch support to Labour

Peter Riddell and Robert Worcester observe a change of political heart among the reading public since 1992

Only a third of the readers of the five broadsheet quality daily newspapers now support the Conservatives, according to a new analysis by MORI for *The Times*. At the 1992 election, 47 per cent of quality paper readers asked, supported the Tories; now 47 per cent say they support Labour.

Based on interviews with 17,296 people during the first three months of this year, the poll shows that the biggest swings against the Tories since the 1992 election have occurred among readers of traditionally Conservative-inclined papers such as *The Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Express*, *Daily Mail* and *The Sun*. The biggest switch — 24 per cent from

CONSERVATIVES LOSE ACROSS THE BOARD

Daily title	Sample size	Readers %	Con %	Lab %	Lib-Dem %	Con to Lab % swing since 1992
The Sun	3,424	20	24	63	10	24.0
Daily Mirror	2,571	15	9	82	8	15.0
Daily Star	857	3	14	73	11	15.0
Daily Mail	1,888	11	43	38	17	23.0
Daily Express	1,127	7	49	35	14	19.5
The Daily Telegraph	1,070	6	51	31	16	20.5
The Times	714	4	42	36	18	22.5
The Guardian	672	4	6	78	12	16.0
The Independent	418	2	1	62	21	15.0
Financial Times	183	1	1	49	35	17.5
All	17,296	100	27	55	14	18.5

Source: MORI

Tories to Labour — has occurred among readers of *The Sun*. This compares with an 18.5 point swing by the public as a whole.

The fall in Conservative support among readers of these papers underlines the disillusion of previous Tory loyalists with the performance of the Government. In the case of readers of most papers there has been a direct movement from Tory to Labour.

The swing against the Tories has been an above average 22.5 per cent among readers of *The Times*, though

this could also reflect the impact of the big jump in circulation since 1993. Just over two fifths (42 per cent) of current readers of *The Times* say they would vote for the Tories, as against nearly two thirds of readers at the time of the 1992 election. Just under two fifths (38 per cent) of readers now say they would support Labour. The balance of party lead has fluctuated within a few points over the last couple of years. This time support for the Tories among the readers of *The Times* has been lower than among the readers of *The Daily Telegraph*

(still more than half). *Daily Express* and *Daily Mail*. Now, only 26 per cent of readers of the popular tabloids support the Tories, with 60 per cent backing Labour, and just 11 per cent choosing the Lib-Dems.

Among readers of centre-left newspapers, such as *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, there has been a big shift from the Lib-Dems to Labour. While support for the Lib-Dems among the public as a whole has dropped by 4 percentage points since the last election, the decline is 13 to 14 points for readers of these two papers. Support for Labour has risen by 23 to 25 points, against 21 points nationally.

The same pattern is broadly true of readers of the Sunday papers.

● Voting-intention figures are based on interviews with 17,296 adults between January and March and exclude those who said they would not vote (10 per cent), were undecided (7 per cent) or who refused to name a party (3 per cent). The comparison is with 22,726 people interviewed during the 1992 general election.

● Robert Worcester is founder and chairman of MORI and Peter Riddell is political columnist of *The Times*.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY APRIL 24 1996

CBI gloom on industry standstill

Confidence flat but upturn expected in longer term

By Philip Bassett
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS leaders painted their gloomiest picture of the state of UK industry yesterday when they said that manufacturing activity had failed to pick up and was now at a standstill, while business confidence was continuing to fall.

The findings of the latest quarterly industrial trends survey from the Confederation of British Industry, rested mainly on persistently excessive stock levels and were worse than the City had been forecasting. Although manufacturers are predicting improvements, recent CBI studies have shown such expectations to be largely unfulfilled.

Output and total new orders remained flat in the CBI's April survey, which also showed confidence dipping for the fourth successive quarterly report.

Employment in manufacturing fell at its sharpest rate for two years, but there was what CBI leaders described as an "encouraging" trend on costs, with prices increasing by less than was expected and the growth in unit costs slowing more rapidly.

Adair Turner, director-general of the CBI, suggested that the longer-term prospects for the economy were still improving, with the CBI expecting an upturn in the economy later this year.

However, the CBI gave a warning that, on the basis of the

survey, interest rates should neither be cut nor raised. While they accepted that many manufacturers might well welcome a further cut in rates to help their own economic positions, the confederation suggested that most companies knew that a further rate cut would not help the economy overall, and so should be avoided.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank and of the CBI's economic affairs committee, acknowledged: "We are experiencing a period of static manufacturing activity, reflected by flat orders, particularly in export markets that have been the backbone of recovery

over the past few years." However, he insisted that beyond manufacturing, other evidence from retailing and the financial services sector, for instance, suggested that the economy as a whole was now performing better than it had been.

Among the main findings of the CBI survey were:

- Output: Total output fell back from a net balance - companies reporting an increase set against those recording a fall - of 6 per cent in the last survey to zero now, the lowest since October 1993. Fourteen per cent net of manufacturers expect output to rise.
- Orders: Total new orders also

stood at zero, marginally up from -1, with domestic demand up slightly at 3 per cent, though exports were also flat.

□ Stocks: The CBI said that stocks had built up as a result of the slowdown in demand, and that the currently high level of stocks "pose a risk to the strength of economic growth over the rest of the year unless they are run down quickly". Such a high stock overhang may dampen manufacturers' ability to expand output if demand rises.

□ Jobs: Employment in manufacturing fell over the past four months at the sharpest rate since April 1994. Questioned on the

scepticism expressed privately by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, about the Government's own figures suggesting a continuing growth in manufacturing jobs, which was revealed in a leaked internal Whitehall document yesterday, CBI officials would only say, diplomatically, that they expected the Government's figures to be revised in the future.

□ Confidence: Business optimism fell back again, for the fourth successive quarter, though the 3 per cent balance was a smaller fall than manufacturers had expected.

Confederation analysts suggested that reasonably firm investment intentions in plant and machinery indicated that companies remained "fairly upbeat" about prospects for the year ahead.

Tory turning point, page 32

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3833.0	(-19.7)
Yield	3.28%	
FT-SE All share	1918.33	(-7.05)
Nikkei	22118.88	(-4.01)
New York		
Dow Jones	5571.97	(+7.23)
S&P Composite	648.00	(+1.11)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	90 1/2%	(90 1/2%)
Yield	6.78%	(6.75%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
1-yr long bill	10 1/2%	(10 1/2%)
Yen	161.21	(161.15)
£ Index	84.0	(83.8)
STERLING		
New York	1.5161*	(1.5125)
London		
DM	1.5141	(1.5113)
DM	2.2887	(2.2818)
SP	7.7765	(7.7504)
Yen	161.21	(161.15)
£ Index	84.0	(83.8)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.5192*	(1.5170)
FF	5.1365*	(5.1370)
SP	1.2282*	(1.2287)
Yen	106.55*	(106.60)
£ Index	96.4	(96.5)
Tokyo close Yen	106.85	
SEATTLE		
Best 15-day (Jul)	\$19.10	(\$18.35)
GOLD		
London close	\$382.05	(\$391.70)
* denotes midday trading price		

Delay over CINman sale could cost £50m

By Robert Miller

THE Treasury and the coalminers' pension funds stand to lose at least £50 million because of the continued delay in the sale of CINman, the company that looks after the two schemes on which more than 550,000 miners and staff have a claim.

British Coal, which is in the process of selling its business operations, said yesterday that details of the future of the £17 billion British Coal staff scheme and the Mineworkers Pension Scheme, were being discussed with a number of interested parties and an announcement would be made "in the next few weeks".

It is understood that the purchase price being discussed between British Coal and potential CINman bidders is about £25 million, compared with the £75 million offer believed to have been tabled by Friends Provident, the UK insurer, late last year.

Of the £75 million, roughly two-thirds would have gone to the Treasury, with the remainder being divided between the two coalminers' schemes. More

than four months have now elapsed since it was first confirmed that Friends Provident, which manages some £15 billion of funds, was in exclusive talks to buy CINman.

The UK insurer, which is now in preliminary discussions about a takeover by the Prudential, had beaten off a final rival bid by Sal Oppenheim, a German company.

The CINman talks with Friends Provident foundered earlier this year on opposition from within CINman and among the trustees of the two pension schemes.

Broadly, members of the staff scheme backed the pioneer of the Stewardship ethical funds, while trustees of the miners' fund favoured Sal Oppenheim. Last month, Barry Southcott, the managing director of CINman, left abruptly.

CINven, the highly rated venture capital arm of CINman, was sold to its management last year in a deal believed to be worth less than £5 million.



Liam Strong, left, and Sir Bob Reid after yesterday's £273 million turnaround into the red

Bleak outlook at Sears after loss of £120m

By Sarah Bagnall

SEARS, the sprawling retail group that ranges from Selfridges department stores to Freemans catalogues, yesterday revealed a sharp fall into the red and a bleak picture of current trading.

The group suffered a £273 million swing in fortunes from a pre-tax profit of £153.8 million to a loss of £119.7 million in the year to January 31. Sales rose 8.9 per cent to £2.3 billion.

The downturn reflected one-off costs of £219.8 million as a result of the group's extensive restructuring last year, together with reduced operating profits from all the group's divisions with the exception of Selfridges.

British Shoe, the group's biggest division, saw profits fall 80 per cent to £7.5 million on sales down 2.2 per cent to £604.8 million. Liam Strong, chief executive, blamed the fall on "an unfriendly retail climate and a poor performance by 'Deleco' and stock problems at Shoe City and Shoe Express, its new shoe formats. The group, chaired by Sir

Bob Reid, failed to manage effectively the new formats alongside old formats, such as Saxe and Freeman Hardy Willis, which have been sold.

Referring to the new formats, Mr Strong said: "We had too much stock in the first half and too little in the second." Remedial action has been taken but the effect will take time to feed through.

The clothing division, which encompasses Wallis, Richards, Miss Selfridge, Warehouse and Adams, saw profits slide 4 per cent to £31.7 million while profits from Freemans, the home shopping operation, fell 8 per cent to £38 million.

Trading in the first ten weeks of the year was depressed with like-for-like sales falling 3.1 per cent, with the largest decline of 8.3 per cent at Freemans. In spite of the declining fortunes the group held the final dividend, due July 1, at 2.9p, making an unchanged total of 3.95p for the year.

Power slump
Electricity stocks lost some sparkle yesterday as experts said the market was largely ignoring political pressure on the Government to block two controversial power takeovers. National Power dipped as the odds on Southern Company, America's biggest utility, getting its proposed £8 billion-plus bid for National Power off the ground appeared to be growing longer. Stock market 30

Bank sale
Standard Chartered has reached an agreement in principle to sell its international private banking arm to Swiss Bank Corporation for an estimated £150 million. Page 32

Harvey Nichols in huge demand

By Sarah Bagnall

SHARES in Harvey Nichols, the quality Knightsbridge store that is seeking a stock market listing, have been 15 times oversubscribed at a price that values the company at £148.5 million. Institutions are being offered shares at 270p - 30p above the top end of City forecasts.

Dickson Concepts, the Hong Kong branded luxury goods group, is selling 43.6 per cent of Harvey Nichols in order to release finance for expansion.

The store's directors are forecasting a 52 per cent leap in pre-tax profits from £6 million to £9.1 million in the year to March 30. However, the tax charge is expected to leap from £850,000 to £3.3 million as the group is no longer able to utilise losses incurred in earlier years. Sales are forecast to rise from £77.5

million to £90.1 million. Last month Harvey Nichols, where Joseph Wan is chief executive, said it intends to open smaller regional stores and expand into stand-alone restaurants.

Tempus, page 30



Wan: profits leap

Crest to be investigated by OFT

By Our City Staff

CREST, the Stock Exchange's new electronic share settlement system being developed by the Bank of England, is to be investigated by the Office of Fair Trading.

John Bridgeman, Director General of Fair Trading, said yesterday he wants to see Stock Exchange trades published immediately they are dealt.

He told the all-party Treasury Select Committee, currently conducting an inquiry into the future of the Stock Exchange, that he wanted to see 75 per cent of trades published immediately, 95 per cent within one hour and all trades published within 5 days.

He said it was up to Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to decide eventually how trades would be published.

Institutions back BET bid defence

By Alasdair Murray

BET's defence against Rentokil has received a major boost, with three more institutions pledging their support against the £2.1 billion hostile bid.

Yesterday's declaration of support was made as Rentokil moved to spend £130 million to snap up a 6.8 per cent stake in BET. However, BET revealed that fund management groups Prudential, which holds a 5.26 per cent stake, EZWIM (2.91 per cent) and Hermes (1.57 per cent) had all undertaken not to accept the bid.

Last Friday, BET's largest shareholder, M&G, which holds 7.5 per cent of the share capital, said it would reject the takeover and heaped praise on the management skills of John Clark, chief executive. A total of 17.25 per cent has now been pledged in favour of the BET management.

Rentokil paid 202.5p a share for the stake - equivalent to the cash price of the offer. The company said that the share purchase had helped increase market confidence in the bid.

Rentokil said the support from these institutions for BET came as "no surprise". It said that the institutions involved traditionally supported incumbent management, while parts of the holding were indexed and could not be sold. Clive Thompson, Rentokil chief executive, said: "We remain confident of victory but not complacent."

Rentokil has offered nine Rentokil shares and £10 in cash for every 20 BET shares, as well as a 4p dividend.

Shares in BET rose 4p to 205.5p, 3p above the cash offer price. Rentokil shares closed up 5.5p at 358p, pushing the value of the cash and shares offer to 215p.

cent of the company's turnover, made clear that they were lost at the last minute against previous indications.

Babcock, which recently lost a £70 million order for a gas plant, is no longer tendering in Saudi Arabia.

GFT, the telecommunications systems supplier, will today announce a Saudi order for phone cards expected to be worth up to £3 million.

Pennington, page 29

Dissident row blamed for lost orders

By Christine Buckley

POLITICAL tension between Britain and Saudi Arabia over Muhammad al-Masari, the Saudi dissident, is costing engineering orders, Babcock International said yesterday.

After the engineering group said that it had lost \$20 million worth of orders over the past six months, John Parker, chairman, said the economic impact of the UK's hospitality towards Mr al-Masari

had to be considered. His comments follow a claim by Davy, the equipment maker, that it had lost a \$1 billion steel plant contract because of Saudi anger at Britain's handling of the case. The dissident has been allowed to stay in the UK for four years after a deportation plan was withdrawn.

If Saudi Arabia is stonewalling British companies the financial toll could run into billions of pounds. Babcock highlighted the Saudi prob-

lem in a profits warning to the Stock Exchange. The market, which cut Babcock's shares 15 1/2p to 113p, marked down the prices of a large number of companies, including British Aerospace, Vickers, GEC and Rolls-Royce, with strong exposure to Saudi Arabia.

Although Babcock has not been told directly that orders were lost because of the Saudi annoyance at the UK, Mr Parker said business experience in the country, which usually accounts for 6 per

cent of the company's turnover, made clear that they were lost at the last minute against previous indications.

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PORTFOLIO

TUC and CBI urged to join for training

By Philip Bassett
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Government yesterday urged Britain's business and trade unions to join together to promote new standards of training at work.

The move by Gillian Shephard, the Employment and Education Secretary, came as she took the unusual step of speaking to a union conference of speaking to a union conference on training and lifetime learning. Some left-wing union leaders drew an unfavourable parallel

between Mrs Shephard's move and the current Labour Party leadership, wondering when was the last time Labour had called for a new deal between employers and unions, rather than seeking to distance itself from unions in favour of business.

In a speech to a TUC conference, Mrs Shephard was favourably received when she emphasised the importance of training to improving Britain's competitiveness, and said jobs would "inevitably" disappear as tastes, products and markets changed. She said the value of the

Government's Investors in People (IIP) initiative, a move which makes an award to organisations that have reached demanding standards of training and managing employees.

Approving both CBI and TUC statements on IIP, she called for a new partnership between the two to promote the IIP standard—a "public and practical joint programme" to stimulate employers and employees into pressing for IIP status.

She said: "Government is doing its bit. We are already putting £45 million behind IIP-related activities. I

challenge you to do yours," John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, who will today become the first TUC leader to address an annual conference of the Institute of Directors, immediately accepted the challenge, and said he would contact the CBI to start establishing such a move.

Mrs Shephard also gave warning that training and skills were the only way to avoid Britain being forced to compete with other economies on the basis of low pay—a charge unions and Labour have often made against the Government. But she told the

TUC: "If we are to avoid the necessity to compete on wages, we must compete on knowledge and skills."

David Blunkett, Labour's Shadow Employment and Education Secretary, told the conference that the Government, industry, unions and individuals had to "build a partnership to revolutionise training in Britain", adding that Labour will soon announce proposals to promote its plans for individual learning accounts for young people—including the possibility of free credits for those achieving key skills.

CBI blames national law not Europe for jobless

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS acknowledged yesterday that Europe's labour market problems stem from individual countries' employment laws and costs rather than any changes imposed by Brussels.

The statement by Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, was seized on by Labour leaders as an acknowledgement by industry that European regulation, such as the EU social chapter, is less harmful to business and jobs than the Government claims.

While the CBI leader made clear business's continuing opposition to the social chapter and to Labour's declared intent to end the UK's Maastricht Treaty opt-out from it, he struck a careful line about its impact, rejecting both the idea that the opt-out is heartless and damages British workers' employment conditions and that accepting the social chapter "would lead to an immediate and catastrophic collapse of British competitiveness". Neither view, he said, survived close analysis.

Speaking to business and Labour leaders at a conference on Labour and business earlier addressed by Tony Blair, the Labour leader, Mr Turner rejected the claim that social initiatives from Brussels were responsible for the high unemployment and low job growth which characterises mainland European labour markets.

He said: "What is wrong with continental labour markets is almost entirely the product of national labour laws, and nationally imposed non-wage labour costs—not a European-level imposition." He rejected the idea—which Conservatives claim Mr Blair believes—that Britain will be able to go into the social chapter, and then "pick and

choose" which of its measures it wants to implement.

British business, he said, did not primarily oppose the social chapter because of the two measures so far introduced under it, on parental leave and on European-style works councils—though he said that both were too prescriptive. Its opposition rested on the process of the social chapter, which "over time" could lead to the imposition of some of the labour market rigidities seen in some individual EU countries.

He rejected Labour's plans for a national minimum wage, insisting that there were "better ways to fight the impact of low pay" through in-work benefits and tax changes, though he welcomed Labour's changes to a "more pro-market and business-friendly tone and approach".

Laura D'Andrea Tyson, President Clinton's national economic adviser, told the Industry Forum conference—a body set up to promote links between Labour and business—that the US Administration was now pursuing a "third way" between the European model of regulated labour markets and the traditional American deregulated model.

While maintaining flexibility, Dr Tyson said the US was introducing moves to increase people's "pay cheque, employability and health and pension securities". She said it had so far produced growth forecast at about 2.5 per cent, 8.5 million new jobs since 1992—and cited a US Government study showing that two thirds of the jobs created were "good jobs" in areas of employment at above median wages.

Dr Tyson urged the UK to follow such a third way while dismissing ideas that inflation was dead.



Bill Wood, managing director of Cosalt, the supplier of marine and industrial safety equipment, which yesterday said first-half pre-tax profits increased to £1.11 million from £828,000. The interim dividend is 3.6p, compared with 3.25p, payable out of earnings of 6.18p a share, as against 4.48p last time. The shares fell 7p to 166p

Railtrack flotation winning support

By Jonathan Prynn
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE £1.8 billion flotation of Railtrack next month was given a boost yesterday when it was revealed that more than 1.4 million people have expressed an interest so far in buying shares by registering with share shops.

The sale of the company that owns Britain's rail infrastructure has attracted more interest than expected in spite of a low-key marketing campaign and a backdrop of political uncertainty. A generous package of discounts and an early dividend payment, are believed to have stimulated interest.

Potential private investors are not obliged to register with share shops to be able to participate in the flotation but will be given more attractive terms if they do. About 140,000 of the 1.4 million have been automatically registered by banks or building societies.

The registration period closes on Monday. City advisers have been surprised by the level of interest. The final tally of registrations is expected to be about 1.7 million, compared with the 3 million who registered for the second-tranche sale of the electricity generating companies last year.

Mini prospectuses and application forms will be sent out to those who have registered in the second week in May and completed application forms must be in by May 15. The flotation is on May 20.

Investors can opt for a 15p discount off the price of shares held until the second instalment, up to a maximum of £120 discount on 800 shares, or choose to receive one bonus share for every 15 shares up to a maximum of 80 free shares. The public will also receive a discount compared with the price to be paid by the financial institutions.

Ministers announced last week that shareholders would receive a dividend on their shares for the financial year ending March 1996, worth a total of £69 million.

Pennington, page 29

NatWest drive to keep down costs

NATWEST, the banking group, yesterday advised that it would continue to drive down costs, but said that it believed the economic outlook for the UK was for "slow but steady" growth. Lord Alexander of Weedon, the chairman, speaking at the group's annual meeting, said the growth in the amount of loans being agreed would be steady, but not spectacular. The bank made profits of £1.75 billion in 1995, a 10 per cent increase on the previous year, and a 13-fold improvement on the £134 million it made five years ago.

"Obviously this reflects in part the changing economic climate. We have come through a deep recession into a period of slow but steady growth," Lord Alexander told shareholders. "But it reflects even more the professional way in which we are managing our business. We have a clear strategy, developed after careful thought, and after learning from the tough experiences for the banking industry over recent years."

Lord Alexander warned shareholders that the bank planned to cut the ratio of its costs to its income by 10 per cent by the end of the century although he did not say whether this would lead to job cuts.

Closed societies

MORE building societies are barring their doors to outsiders. The Cheshire, the 19th largest society, is closing its investments within its North West operating area. Previously the society had imposed a £2,500 minimum investment limit to repel speculators from other regions. The Ipswich, ranked number 46, has also restricted its accounts to customers from four East Anglian postcodes: IP (Ipswich), CO (Colchester), NR (Norwich) and CB (Cambridge). Some 24 small to medium-sized societies are now open to local residents only.

Rothschild defection

NM ROTHSCHILD has suffered a serious defection with the resignation of Michael Phair, who headed up privatisation work in Eastern Europe and other emerging markets. Mr Phair is to join UBS, where he will jointly head up the Swiss bank's telecommunications group alongside Michael Lehmann. His departure is a serious blow to Rothschild, which sees its role as adviser to governments in emerging markets on the privatisation of state-owned assets. A spokesman for UBS said the bank regarded telecommunications as a key area to develop.

Trade teams stand by

EUROPEAN UNION member states will decide tomorrow whether to call an emergency meeting of trade ministers in Geneva next week. EU sources said the committee of EU ambassadors would take the decision at tomorrow's regular weekly meeting. The emergency session would probably take place on Monday afternoon, just before the April 30 deadline for tying up the deal to open up world telecommunications networks under the unfinished business from the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

PIA names candidates

THE Personal Investment Authority, the watchdog for firms selling direct to the public, yesterday announced the candidates to fill the boardroom places vacated by three practitioner directors whose term of office expires in July. Of the three names put forward by the PIA only Nicolas Conyers, a partner in a Leeds firm of independent advisers, is a newcomer—to replace the retiring Tony Gordon. Peter Gray, chairman of the Tunbridge Wells Equitable Society, and Kevin McBrien of NPI, the insurer, are up for re-election.

Alexandra beats slide

ALEXANDRA WORKWEAR, the office and factory uniform supplier, shrugged off deteriorating market conditions to increase pre-tax profits 23 per cent to £5.3 million in 1995. The total dividend rises to 6.5p a share from 6p, with a 4p final. Earnings rose 23 per cent to 10.3p a share. The expanding overseas sector brought in 9 per cent of the company's turnover. European sales grew by 20 per cent to £5.4 million. UK retail sales grew by 7 per cent to £10.8 million, and UK specialist sales grew 4.5 per cent to £46.7 million.

Volkswagen accelerates

VOLKSWAGEN, Europe's largest vehicle maker whose marques span VW, Audi, Seat and Skoda, lifted net profit to DM116 million from DM13 million in the first quarter of 1996. Turnover rose by 15.4 per cent to DM24.5 billion and the number of vehicles delivered increased by 14.6 per cent to 946,915. But the company said it expected sales and turnover for the full year to rise only slightly "owing to a hardening of international competition and weak economic growth" in key markets. Net profit would be only slightly higher than the DM336 million for 1995.

Digital profits leap 67%

DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORP, the US computer manufacturer, lifted profits 67 per cent to \$124 million in the third quarter, its best performance for the period in six years. Earnings were 74 cents a share, up from 44 cents previously. Third-quarter revenues were \$3.6 billion (\$3.5 billion). Digital said revenues from its personal computer business were lower than expected during the third quarter, blaming a slowdown in the commercial market sector, competitive pricing pressure and higher levels of inventory in distribution channels.

Trentham Gardens sale

TRENTHAM GARDENS, the leisure park and tourist attraction near Stoke on Trent, is for sale. British Coal, which owns the 725-acre site, is selling it as part of a large property disposal, and privatisation of non-running activities. The sale of the gardens, which include a tract designed by Capability Brown, the English landscape gardener (1716-83), could provoke some local objections, with many residents regarding the area as a virtual public amenity. It is expected to fetch around £3 million.

Littlechild moves on practice codes

By Christine Buckley

TOUGHER consumer obligations on electricity companies were yesterday set in train by the industry regulator in preparation for 1998 when households will be able to shop around for electricity.

Professor Stephen Littlechild will demand stronger codes of practice for vulnerable groups such as the elderly and sick and call for public statements on service so the 25 million households may compare performance. Customers will also be protected by a standard on contract terms so they can switch contracts with reasonable flexibility and choose a payment option.

His plans come as the electricity consumers committees are working on plans to

implement a marketing code of practice. They want electricity suppliers to abide by ethics either voluntarily or via the Electricity Association.

General consumer pressure has grown for standards of marketing and trading after the controversy over sales tactics used by Swb, the southwest regional electricity company, in its marketing of gas supplies. Swb was highly criticised for aggressive marketing of gas and later abandoned its doorstep campaign.

Professor Littlechild's draft licence proposals for suppliers also outline the duty of regional electricity companies to set up metering operations to make the mechanics of competition work.

Rover plans for world expansion

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

ROVER is planning to launch a programme of expansion into more worldwide markets after announcing a 6 per cent increase in its world sales during the first three months of the year.

The UK car manufacturer promised a "stronger presence across South East Asia and South America" and a "more comprehensive representation in eastern Europe".

The commitment to expansion was given yesterday by John Russell, Rover's sales and marketing director, at the Turin Motor Show in Italy.

Mr Russell said that worldwide Rover sales had totalled nearly 123,000 vehicles in the first quarter of 1996, while growth in continental Europe

had risen 16 per cent. Although he would not supply full details, Mr Russell said that Rover would "be entering—or re-entering with new products after years of absence—between 20 and 30 further markets around the world".

While it plans expansion abroad, Rover is looking to sell fewer, but more prestigious, vehicles in Britain as it moves more upmarket.

Last month, BMW said Rover had incurred a £150 million loss last year under German accounting conventions, while under UK methods it would have shown a £91 million profit before interest and tax—a rise of nearly 10 per cent.

Publicans anxious about change to beer distribution rules

Brewers win EC reassurance on tied pubs

FROM A CORRESPONDENT
IN BRUSSELS

THE European Commission has reassured British brewers that it will listen to their reasons for keeping UK pubs outside European Union competition law before taking a stance on the issue.

A Commission source, who is close to Karel Van Miert, European Competition Commissioner, said that a delegation of British brewers had been told that a meeting of European experts would be arranged "either before or after the summer". At issue is the renewal of rules that exempt beer distribution agreements from EU competition rules. The so-called block-exemption, which also covers petrol stations, will end at the end of 1997.

The Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association (BLRA), which met Mr Van Miert in Brussels on Monday, wants the exemption to be extended for a minimum of 15 years. It says its members account for more than 98 per cent of the British beer market and own 36,000 pubs.

British pubs are often owned by brewing companies, which restrict tenants to selling their own brands and that of one competitor. BLRA argues that the current system allows small brewers to compete with larger companies, benefits retailers who need little capital and gives consumers a good choice at low prices.

The UK consumers enjoy the lowest pub prices in the major beer drinking European Union countries," BLRA said in a report handed to the Commission by Paul Nicholson, the chairman.

British brewers say the "property tie" does not harm the beer trade within the EU. But the Commission is running a longstanding investigation of complaints from pub tenants about lease arrangements imposed by pub owner Interpreneur Enterprise, a subsidiary of Australia's Foster's Brewing Group. They particularly objected to paying more than free pubs supplied with the same beer.

British brewers' fear that the EU will question the way one of Britain's most venerable institutions is run, arises from work in the Commission's competition services on a consultation paper on whether rules governing distribution agreements in general should be changed. The so-called green paper on vertical restraints was due to be adopted in March, but the most optimistic forecasts are that this will now happen in June.



Van Miert: met brewers

	Bank	Buy	Bank	Sell
Australia \$	2.01	1.95		
Austria Sch	17.13	16.69		
Belgium Fr	163.02	157.97		
Canada C	2.167	2.097		
Cyprus Cyp	0.782	0.807		
Denmark Kr	9.46	8.88		
Finland Mk	7.89	7.16		
France Fr	6.18	7.23		
Germany DM	2.45	2.24		
Greece Dr	385.00	361.00		
Hong Kong \$	12.34	11.34		
Ireland Pt	0.88	0.94		
Italy Lit	3,100	4,540		
Japan Yen	175.20	159.30		
Malaysia M	4.68	4.57		
Netherlands Gld	2.717	2.57		
New Zealand \$	2.38	2.14		
Norway Kr	10.42	9.63		
Portugal Esc	248.00	227.50		
S. Africa Rd	8.91	8.11		
Spain Ptas	165.00	165.00		
Sweden Kr	10.77	1.21		
Switzerland Fr	1.38	1.31		
Turkey Lira	11847.00	10600.00		
USA \$	1.609	1.478		

Notes for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to treasury cheques. Rates as of close of trading yesterday.

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St Ives acquisition surge

Southern cleared for bid

Lonrho

THE European Commission is expected today to back a proposed multi-million pound link-up between Lonrho and... to mining group and... the South African... would create one of the world's... biggest suppliers of platinum... European major industry... The intended merger of... Impala Platinum, Gemcor's...

□ Six bankers for nukes sale □ Labour's misguided assault on accountants □ Cost of any Saudi backlash

A positive release of energy

□ **BRITISH Energy**, a powerful force on world markets, became a part of the energy industry of the 21st century. Write to this address for your prospectus...

Waffle, waffle, waffle, and not a mention of the N word — just for one moment it could all have been thus. One or two of the bright boys in bow ties and blue spectacles bidding for the heavy advertising campaign for this summer's £2 billion-plus flotation of British Energy, which starts at the end of May, had advocated its strict abolition.

The dropping of "nuclear" from the new name for British Energy, which runs eight nuclear stations, provoked howls of amusement last year. The decision not to feature a single train in the promotion of Railtrack was equally hilarious. What further fun we could all have had with the Power Source that Dare not Speak Its Name.

Wiser counsel has prevailed, and those tempted to buy into the last privatisation for a while, if not forever, will know just what they are applying for. The wonder, as we survey the two bargain-basement sales of the summer, is that those sales will now almost certainly go ahead.

When it became apparent last

year that the Government was going ahead with the sale of the nukes and the rail network, there were enormous doubts. The former were terrifyingly dangerous, the latter deeply unpopular. What is more, the two were tied together by a timetable that required nukes to follow rail by a very short margin.

The advisers simply priced the lot to go. Railtrack is being sold with an indicated price range next Wednesday that should set the yield at above 7 per cent; British Energy ditto, probably. So BE will be a straight yield stock, throwing off cash to fund that yield from assets that are built and up and running. There are not even the political concerns that bedevilled Railtrack: Labour approves of the sale because the unions, strong in the nuclear industry, accept it. Even Greenpeace thinks, quite rightly, that a float would mean the end of the nuclear building programme.

Today the syndicate of half a dozen banks to sell the shares

around the world will be announced. Their research notes will then dribble out starting in mid-May and, boy, will they ever be positive. The lead adviser, Barclays de Zoete Wedd, already stands accused of over-egging the nuclear pudding, particularly on the key issues of output, that is, what average percentage of all the plant will be up and running in future, and the electricity "pool". Some in the industry are concerned that power prices short-term are set to fall, bad news for British Energy. It will be interesting to see the syndicate's conclusions.

Brown blunders in loophole land

□ **GORDON Brown's** attack on tax accountants is fatuous. They can take it, and will doubtless claim it as a deduction. But the ranting Shadow Chancellor has missed the point. Where there is uncertainty, aggressive tax



advisers suggest their clients might like to take precautions. There is nothing more uncertain than the run-up to a likely change of government, especially when the would-be new regime understandably fails to spell out its tax plans in detail in advance.

To suggest that wealthier taxpayers should plan for the worst does not imply that Labour is studying Stalin's treatment of the kulaks as a post-election model. But who can be sure? The Tory switch to self-assessment, and all that goes with it, may oblige wealthier investors to pay more than £1 billion of tax early, amounting almost to a one-off

levy. A nasty tax surprise is much more likely to happen to you than a win on the lottery, whatever a party's stated intentions.

Labour has repeatedly stated that it will crack down hard on tax avoidance by slamming shut loopholes. Admittedly, this was mainly an uncontested ruse by Mr Brown to avoid talking about his real tax plans. But accountants and others would be cavalier to write this off completely.

Loopholes are the basic tools of tax advisers. As Mr Brown and other Labour speakers have often confirmed, there is rarely a clear line between a loophole and an intended tax incentive. How about profit-related pay, or the generous rules for small firms and venture capital trusts? Occasionally, smart advisers spot and exploit foul-ups in tax law. Most "loopholes" are just abuse of intended reliefs.

Before each Budget, accountants send out action lists covering possible changes. Taxpayers who follow them blindly, without

using their nous, are fools. Those who stick their heads in the sand are likely to end up like investors in an ostrich scheme.

Battle lines drawn in the sand

□ **AT LEAST** they had the grace not to blame the National Lottery. But there was immediate suspicion on the stock market that accident-prone Babcock International was taking advantage of the well-publicised rift with Saudi Arabia to cover all manner of troubles elsewhere.

This did not stop the shares of other engineers from subsiding in sympathy yesterday. Such culture clashes are inevitable one thinks back to the Pergau dam affair, or *Death of a Princess*. The Saudis and their like will genuinely never comprehend why a state-licensed broadcaster, for example, can peddle any line not approved by the Government, and this uncertainty should be built into

share prices of companies that trade with such nations.

Babcock may indeed have lost \$200 million of Saudi work since September, but there can never be a proven link with the mischief made by one London-based dissident. There are plenty of other reasons for a profits shortfall this year, in Germany, America or wherever, and Babcock's inability to split out the numbers tells its own tale.

If the escalation of the al-Masari affair last week does lead to loss of Saudi business, then it is those who have yet to sign contracts who will suffer. British Aerospace's rolling warplanes programme should be safe, failing any complete breakdown in diplomatic relations, and likewise Rolls-Royce's £200 million power station project. It is arms-sellers like Vickers, GEC and GKN that might worry.

Defence sources were last night indicating that, below the surface, it is business as usual with the House of Saud. The next clear pointer will come in June and July, when Vickers goes in to bat for 150 new battle tanks worth £500 million against an inferior French product. It may not only be the Challenger II that is on trial in the Arabian desert this summer.

St Ives seeks more acquisitions after surge to £19.6m

BY CARL MORTISHED

ST IVES, the printing group, is seeking acquisitions after a 25 per cent rise in first-half pre-tax profits to £19.6 million. The company, whose products range from bibles and consumer magazines to annual reports, raised sales 30 per cent but saw margins slip from 12.3 per cent to 11.8 per cent due to the effect of higher sales of direct response mailing products that increased the value of paper in the company's turnover.

St Ives' profits for the 26 weeks to January 26 include a £1.3 million contribution from Jöhler Druck, a German printer, specialising in magazine inserts and catalogues acquired last August for £15 million. Miles Emley, chairman, said the company continued to see acquisitions in

the commercial and direct response area, both on the Continent and in America.

Mr Emley said the company had suffered from problems installing new equipment. "We have yet to gain the full benefits of improved efficiency and productivity," he said. The company is in the final stage of a three-year £100 million investment programme to upgrade plant and he expects St Ives to spend £30 million in this financial year.

After the collapse of the Net Book Agreement, book sales increased in the UK but the magazine market was volatile due to fluctuations in pagination. Music and multimedia packaging products were buoyant, particularly in The Netherlands and the UK. St Ives financial printing busi-

nesses enjoyed a boost from the high level of takeover activity although international business was not as buoyant. Mr Emley said the level of business had not subsided but he questioned whether activity would continue at the same rate after a change of government. "It looks a bit like a last final fling before the shutters come down," he commented.

St Ives had net cash at the end of January of £22 million and Mr Emley predicted that liquid funds would be slightly lower by the year end. The company is paying an interim dividend of 2.9p, up from 2.5p in the first half last year. Earnings per share rose 20 per cent to 13.37p.

Tempos, page 30



Looking at home and abroad: Miles Emley, left and Brian Edwards, managing director

Southern cleared for bid

SOUTHERN Company, the US utility seeking a merger with National Power, Britain's largest generator, was yesterday cleared by the Takeover Panel to make a bid before its earlier indications (Christine Buckley writes).

Southern had said it would not make a further move until Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, ruled on the bids by National Power and PowerGen, the smaller generator, for Southern Electric and Midlands Electricity, the RECs. The panel said it was free to bid.

Salomon flourishes in the first quarter

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

PROFITS at Salomon Brothers, the US investment bank, rebounded sharply in the first three months of this year, producing the third best quarterly result in its history with net earnings of \$276 million.

Although Salomon does not split out its profits from proprietary trading — trading its own money on the financial markets — much of the increase appears to come from a substantial rise in profits from this area.

Salomon employees benefited from the strong results with remuneration costs during the quarter soaring from \$425 million to \$556 million. Global investment banking and securities business soared from \$60 million at the same time last year to \$368 million, while net revenues increased 68 per cent to \$1 billion.

The company said that both sales and trading had performed strongly, with higher revenue from customer business as well as from the firm's own trading operations.

The equity business recorded the heaviest fall during the quarter, down from \$152 million to \$60 million because of losses on the bank's long-term equity arbitrage positions. Global investment banking revenues rose 53 per cent to \$181 million.

Lonrho faces block on deal

BY JON ASHWORTH

THE European Commission is expected today to block a proposed multi-million pound link-up between Lonrho, and hotels to mining group, and Genor, the South African mining company. The deal would create one of the world's biggest suppliers of platinum, raising monopoly fears in the European motor industry, which uses platinum in catalytic converters.

The intended merger of Impala Platinum, Genor's

subsidiary, with Lonrho's platinum interests has been stalled since November pending the outcome of an EC inquiry. The deal has been approved by shareholders and cleared by South African competition authorities. In spite of that, commissioners are expected to bow to the motor lobby and block the merger.

A negative move by Brussels would complicate life for Lonrho, which plans to divest its mining interests. Genor

has a 27 per cent stake in Lonrho's platinum division. Developments will be watched closely by Anglo American, Genor's rival, which has first pick of the bulk of Lonrho's mining portfolio. Anglo American last month took an option over 18.4 per cent of Lonrho shares, lifting effective control to 28.5 per cent.

Opponents of the link-up include tribal chiefs in South Africa and Tiny Rowland, Lonrho's founder.

Flextech in new channel deal

FLEXTECH, the TV programming company, announced yesterday that it has formed a joint venture to launch a digital satellite channel called Mundo Olé in Latin America (Eric Reguly writes).

Flextech has invested £9 million for a 32.5 per cent stake in the channel. Olé Investments and HBO Olé Partners, comprised of Time Warner Entertainment, Sony Pictures Entertainment and Olé, hold the rest. Mundo Olé will transmit in Spanish

and Portuguese and will feature general entertainment, news and documentaries.

The digital TV market in Latin America is set for strong growth. DirecTV International, the satellite broadcaster, has just launched a service there. The News Corporation, ultimate owner of *The Times*, has formed a partnership to start a similar service.

Digital revolution, page 31

Midland director's £1.8m

A DIRECTOR of Midland Bank received £1.8 million in pay and pension contributions, making him the highest-paid director of a UK clearing bank (Patricia Tchan writes).

Herb Jacobs, who is chairman of the managing partners of Trinkaus & Burkhart, Midland's 71 per cent-owned German commercial and merchant bank, was paid £1.24 million in salary and other remuneration, and £568,000 in pension contributions. He

joined the board as a non-executive director on January 27 last year.

Mr Jacobs' pay was determined by a partnership-related profit sharing scheme. His pension contributions included a one-off charge of £432,000. The annual report does not disclose the contribution made by Trinkaus to Midland's profit.

Keith Whitson, chief executive of Midland, saw his pay rise from £320,000 to a total of £429,000.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

NP's moves distance it from Southern's grasp

THE odds on Southern Company, America's biggest utility, getting its proposed £8 billion-plus bid for National Power off the ground are growing longer by the day.

Shares of National Power fell 9p to 590p yesterday amid a growing realisation within the Square Mile that Southern may have missed its window of opportunity. National Power has not let the grass grow under its feet.

Since the American utility announced its intention of making a bid last week, the power generator has disposed of part of its generating activities to Hanson's Eastern subsidiary and on Monday outlined details of a generous agreed offer for Southern Electric, valuing the latter at £2.5 billion. By contrast Southern Electric rose 12p to 903p.

Later this week, the Government is expected to give the go-ahead for National Power's bid for Southern and Midlands, down 6p to 411p, after the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry.

One leading broker commented: "It seems unlikely that the Americans will make a move now. If they were to bid, it's likely to be dependent on the offer for Southern Electric being aborted."

It now remains to be seen which of the utilities Southern Company will target next. London Electric, down 11p to 844p, is seen as a possible candidate. It has linked with Houston Industries, another US utility.

The rest of the equity market continued to consolidate its position following last week's 90-point surge to a new all-time high. A gloomy CBI industrial trends survey, showing business confidence remaining at a low ebb, raised hopes that there was scope for another cut in interest rates. In the event, another positive start to trading on Wall Street enabled the FT-SE 100 index to close above its low for the day. It finished 19.7 points down at 3,333.0. Turnover topped the one billion mark.

There was renewed speculative buying of Ladbroke, with BZW said to be bidding for stock. The price firmed another 2 1/2p to 196 1/2p, with almost 12.5 million shares changing hands. Dealers still expect a bid for the company. Thorn EMI was also chased higher first thing, with the price touching £18.46 as investors



Muhammad al-Masari is denting Saudi-linked shares

tors bought call options in the June E19 series. Once again talk of a bid refused to die. It ended 11p better at £18.38. Vodafone fell 8 1/2p to 255 1/2p as Merrill Lynch, the broker, lopped £30 million from its current year pre-tax profit forecast. Lex Service jumped 10p to 358p after a positive presentation to institutional investors.

Mayflower, the specialist engineer that makes the body panels for the new MGS car, stood out with a jump of 4 1/2p to 112 1/2p on turnover of one million shares. This is in the wake of a visit by brokers to its Walter Alexander subsidiary in Scotland, which is now trading at a profit.

Full-year figures from Sears, the Selfridges and Freemans mail order retailer, made grim reading, with the group plunging into the red after making provisions totalling £223 million after extensive restructuring. Pre-tax losses totalled almost £120 million compared with a profit last year of £153 million. The only bright spot was a strong performance from Selfridges.

ABN Amro Hoare Govett and SBC Warburg, brokers, paid 2 1/2p each for a total of 64.6 million shares. Rentokil said it had made the move in response to requests from a

number of BET shareholders. It takes Rentokil's acceptance up to 10 per cent.

Last week M&G Investment Management, BET's biggest shareholder with 7.5 per cent, threw its weight behind the board. It was joined yesterday by Prudential Portfolio Managers (5.26 per cent), BZW Investment Management (2.91 per cent), and Hermes (1.57 per cent). BET, 4p better at 205 1/2p, continues to urge shareholders to reject terms of the £2.1 billion bid. Rentokil climbed 6 1/2p to 358 1/2p.

Full-year figures from Babcock International will carry the scars of the political bust-up between the Government and Saudi Arabia over Professor Muhammad al-Masari, the designer.

As a result the group is forecasting pre-tax profits of only £2 million after an £18 million trading loss and an exceptional profit of £21 million. The order book currently stands at more than £400 million.

The shares responded with a fall of 15 1/2p to 113p as more than ten million shares changed hands. The news from Babcock also had a knock-on effect for other Saudi suppliers, with British Aerospace down 14p to 86 1/2p, Rolls-Royce 2p to 238 1/2p, GEC 3p to 355 1/2p, and GKN 13p to 97 1/2p.

Stordata Solutions, the computer software specialist, was left nursing a fall of 8p at 18p after warning the City that profits may fail to match expectations.

GILT-EDGED: Investors were in a cautious mood ahead of today's £3 billion auction of Treasury 6 1/2 per cent 2006. London spent much of the day shadowing overseas bond markets, especially German bunds, where prices rallied after a hesitant start but failed to hold their best levels.

In the futures pit, the June series of the Long Gilt finished just a tick lower at £106 3/4 after trading in narrow limits for much of the session. A total of 47,000 contracts were completed.

Among conventional issues, there was a modest steepening of the yield curve as treasury 8 per cent 2015 fell 1/8p to 9 1/8p, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 gained a tick at £102 1/4.

NEW YORK: Oil shares rallied to put the Dow Jones industrial average ahead and by midday it had added 7.23 points at 5,571.97.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 5571.97 (+7.23)
S&P Composite 649.00 (+1.11)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 2219.88 (+4.01)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 10899.05 (+20.53)

Amsterdam:
EOE Index 552.25 (+0.08)

Sydney:
AO 2200.0 (+32.6)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2530.16 (+2.27)

Singapore:
Straits 2378.73 (+0.23)

Brussels:
General 3056.51 (+3.49)

Paris:
CAC-40 2111.96 (+3.59)

Zurich:
SIX 790.80 (+0.30)

London:
FT 30 2838.0 (+21.3)
FT 100 3830.0 (+19.7)
FTSE Mid 250 4540.0 (+1.26)
FTSE-A 330 1393.5 (+8.1)
FTSE Eurotrack 100 1682.48 (+0.71)
FT A-Share 1916.99 (+7.03)
FT Non Financials 2530.26 (+7.09)
FT Food Index 112.10 (+0.04)
FT Govt Sec 92.42 (+0.32)
Burgundy 38066
SEAQ Volume 1064.1m
USM (Draughts) 21.66 (+1.26)
US\$ 1.5446 (+0.0032)
German Mark 2.3990 (+0.0078)
Exchange Index 84.0 (+0.04)
Rate of England official close (pence)
EBCU 1.2038
ESDR 1.0444
RPI 131.5 Mar (2.7%) Jan 1987-100
RPIX 130.9 Mar (2.7%) Jan 1987-100

RECENT ISSUES

Advent VCT 95
British Smaller Cos 95
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Cap Reg 675% US n/p 25
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Tepnel Life n/p (40) 25

MAJOR CHANGES

RISER:
RICO 224p (+23p)
Cale Inns 183p (+13p)
Real Time 295p (+20p)
Telesec 845p (+30p)
FALLS:
Allen 273p (-25p)
Celtach 588p (-20p)
Blue Circle 358p (-11p)
Booker 372p (-11p)
GUS 748p (-17p)
Scotia 711p (-16p)

Closing Prices Page 33

Must try harder

LIAM STRONG resembles a rather weary schoolteacher in charge of a class of unruly children of mixed ability. No sooner has one problem child been sorted out than another comes bearing a bloody knee and a tear-stained face. What to do? Strong has reduced the class size in the hope that performance will improve and this will be reflected in the results presented to the demanding City governors.

Gone are a myriad of shoe facias, such as Saxone and Curries, and Olympus sports and Millets. All in all, £215.8 million of loss-making assets were shorn from the group last year in return for much-needed cash of £135 million. The City hopes that the class will shrink further, a wish that may be granted as the Hush Puppy brand is under review. In the case of Freemans, however, Strong is a buyer

not a seller — although there are few targets of any size.

The benefits of last year's culling of the extensive Sears empire are still to emerge, as are the IT out-sourcing arrangements. But these are unlikely to have any impact for a couple of years. In the short-term the picture looks bleak, with a disastrous performance at Dolcis and stock problems at the new shoe formats. Although remedial action has been taken more pain will be felt in the first half.

The market is giving Sears little relief: like-for-like sales fell 3.1 per cent in the first two weeks, while home shopping fared worse with an 8.3 per cent decline. The only bright spot is Selfridges, but patience is wearing thin and unless Sears produces some solid improvement, the governors may seek changes at this particular school.

Huntleigh

HUNTLEIGH Technology is an infuriating company. A smallish medical technology group, it was launched on the USM 11 years ago and is now worth more than £250 million. Earnings have grown at a compound rate of 30 per cent per annum and the shares trade on a multiple of almost 30 times.

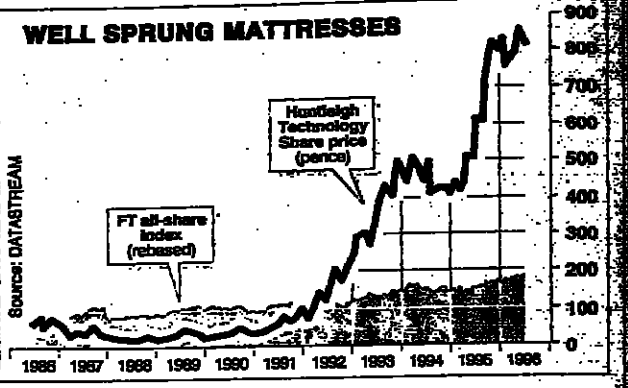
Such ratings tend to be a disincentive to invest: a potential buyer would normally wait for a setback or rights issue to pick up cheaper stock. But Huntleigh never obliges, the company beats every forecast and only once issued shares to fund an acquisition.

As a result, most investors watch from the sidelines — frustrated by its high rating and a small float, with more than half the shares family-owned. What is even more astonishing is Huntleigh's

WELL SPRUNG MATTRESSES

record of confounding its doubters.

The company makes highly engineered products, such as hospital mattresses that prevent bed sores and ultrasonic devices to measure blood flow. Its success lies in the fact that it is a small company supplying a global market. While healthcare providers in ma-



St Ives

THE next time an advertising brochure falls out of your daily newspaper or a promotional circular flops unwelcomed onto your doorstep, stifle your irritation and consider what a boon this is to printers.

St Ives wants a larger share of this growing market — it already has about 5 per cent and last year acquired a German company which specialises in magazine inserts. The strategy is sound: advertisers are seeking more focused ways of targeting consumers, providing printers with a market growing faster than books or magazines. St Ives has about 20 per cent of the book market but the collapse of the Net Book Agreement could make the business more insecure. Some analysts reckon booksellers will focus on bestsellers, reducing demand for printing.

High levels of corporate activity should keep St Ives financial printing busy this

Harvey Nichols

THE question on every investor's lips is what lies inside the silver-lined hatbox that decorates the cover of the Harvey Nichols prospectus. There are many theories: a Chinese fortune cookie, a video of an old episode of *Absolutely Fabulous*, an Oxo cube.

The company's promoters would like you to believe the box contains a share in a company worth untold riches but there is a nagging suspicion in the City that the glossy packaging may conceal nothing but tissue paper.

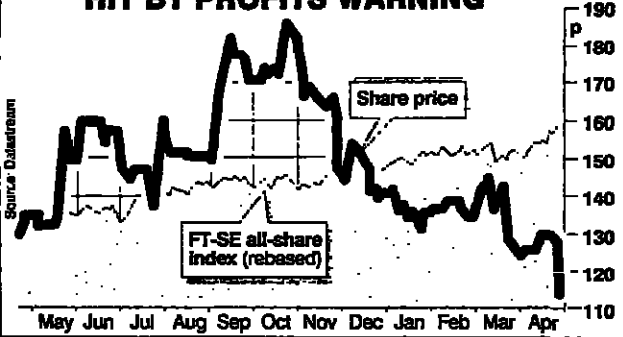
Anyone tempted to be more charitable needs only to glance at the key strengths of Harvey Nichols, as summarised by Morgan

Stanley in its prospectus. Top of the list come words like "image" and "exclusivity", alarm bells to any sensible investor. Opportunities for growth from this one retailer lie in the hope that otherwise sensible Yorkshire women will stop shopping in Harrogate and visit the proposed Harvey Nichols store in Leeds. Otherwise there is eating out, where Harvey Nicks is establishing a Conran-style gastropub in the Oxo tower and paying, it is reported, a very fancy rent for a location in Southwark.

The ultimate turn-off is the price, set at a razing vastly in excess of the stores sector. But what is even more worrying is the relation with the parent, Dickson Concepts, which owns a licence to sell clothes labelled "Harvey Nichols" in Asia for the next 25 years. For that privilege it pays nothing to Harvey Nicks. You should pay nothing.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

BABCOCK INTERNATIONAL: SHARES HIT BY PROFITS WARNING



COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE				ICIS-LRD (London 6.00pm)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES			
COCOA				CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)				WHEAT (close E/)		BARLEY (close E/)	
May	1004-1028	Jul	1049 SLR	Brent Physics	20.80	+1.30	Jan	134.50	May	118.25	
Jun	1028-1052	Aug	1052-1076	Brent 2nd July	20.90	+1.30	Jul	136.15	Sep	114.00	
Jul	1052-1076	Sep	1076-1100	Brent 15 day (Jul)	19.10	+0.80	Nov	139.75	Dec	110.50	
Aug	1076-1100	Oct	1100-1124	W Texas Intermediate (Jul)	22.55	+2.10	Jan	119.75	Mar	116.00	
Sep	1124-1148	Nov	1148-1172	W Texas Intermediate (Nov)	20.90	+0.85	Jul	121.25	Jun	115.00	
Oct	1172-1196	Dec	1196-1220				Nov	123.00	Mar	118.50	
Nov	1220-1244	Jan	1244-1268				Jan	Volume: 1963	Volume: 2200		
Dec	1268-1292										
Jan	1316-1340	Volume: 13279									
Feb	1364-1388										
Mar	1412-1436										
Apr	1460-1484										
May	1508-1532										
Jun	1556-1580										
Jul	1604-1628										
Aug	1652-1676										
Sep	1700-1724										
Oct	1748-1772	Volume: 14256									
Nov	1796-1820										
Dec	1844-1868										
Jan	1892-1916										
Feb	1940-1964										
Mar	1988-2012										
Apr	2036-2060										
May	2084-2108										
Jun	2132-2156										
Jul	2180-2204										
Aug	2228-2252										
Sep	2276-2300										
Oct	2324-2348										
Nov	2372-2396										
Dec	2420-2444										
Jan	2468-2492										
Feb	2516-2540										
Mar	2564-2588										
Apr	2612-2636										
May	2660-2684										
Jun	2708-2732										
Jul	2756-2780										
Aug	2804-2828										
Sep	2852-2876										
Oct	2900-2924										
Nov	2948-2972										
Dec	2996-3020										
Jan	3044-3068										
Feb	3092-3116										
Mar	3140-3164										
Apr	3188-3212										
May	3236-3260										
Jun	3284-3308										
Jul	3332-3356										
Aug	3380-3404										
Sep	3428-3452										
Oct	3476-3500	Volume: 1045									
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Jan	5348-5372										
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Jun	5588-5612										
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Aug	5684-5708										
Sep	5732-5756										
Oct	5780-5804										
Nov	5828-5852										
Dec	5876-5900										
Jan	5924-5948										
Feb	5972-6000										
Mar	6024-6048										
Apr	6072-6096										
May	6120-6144										
Jun	6168-6192										
Jul	6216-6240										
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Dec	6456-6480										
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Feb	6552-6576										
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Apr	6648-6672										
May	6720-6744										
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Jul	6816-6840										
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Oct	7032-7056										
Nov	7104-7128										
Dec	7180-7204										
Jan	7260-7284										
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THE TIMES



CITY DIARY

Tories choose local boy

THE Tories have chosen one of Britain's richest men to fight the Labour stronghold of Barnsley Central at the next general election.

Barnsley-born Paul Sykes, a Yorkshire miner's son turned property developer, who has a fortune estimated at the thick end of £220 million, owns 40 per cent of the much sought-after Meadowhall shopping centre in Sheffield.

The 52-year-old radical, who launched himself in the scrap business at the age of 17 with just £170, was one of the first big investors in the old London Docklands.

Going North

SCOTTISH accents have persuaded Tesco to relocate its customer service centre to Dundee.

The supermarket chain has given warning to 150 "Estuary English" employees, based at its headquarters in Hertfordshire, that they can either move to Dundee or the company will help them to find work elsewhere.

Fifty such call centres have now opened in Scotland by firms who favour the Scottish lilt for their customers.

Riding high

CITY headhunter Jim Furlong, whose speciality is placing United States equity producers, is making up ground in his election campaign for a seat on the Racehorse Owners Association Council. The aply named Furlong is one of ten candidates standing for election this summer but, the man who was once reported to be the highest paid United States equities sales manager in London, is confident the odds are in his favour.



"Registering for shares in Railtrack is not the same as buying a ticket"

Mandela calling

PRESIDENT Mandela has come to the rescue of a British businessman who has been trying for the past year to obtain a South African business permit. Michael McCarthy was almost packed by the time the call came from the President, who had read his letter of complaint in a local newspaper. The 41-year-old, who has spent 500,000 rand setting up a small export business, was told to fax over the relevant paperwork to his savour's secretary immediately.

Crystal clear

NATWEST has won over Chrissie Maher, director of the Plain English Campaign, who awarded the bank Crystal Marks for use of plain English in its annual review.

Such is their relationship that Peter Hammonds, company secretary at NatWest, who has a letter published in today's Times, sent it first to Maher for a Crystal Mark of approval. Maher was at NatWest's annual meeting yesterday to register shareholders' responses to the bank's use of English.

"One woman was so delighted, she said she even knew where the toilets were," chuckles Maher. "I couldn't wait to get out and put my money into NatWest shares."

MORAG PRESTON

Europe moves closer to the edge of a digital revolution

Eric Reguly looks to decode the latest moves in the fast-changing international television sector

THE digital television revolution is about to grip Europe. The service is already available on a test basis in some cities and within a couple of years, millions of viewers who considered four or five channels a luxury will be bombarded with hundreds of them.

The new technology may make video recorders seem quaint relics of the past. A service called near video on demand, made possible by the enormous capacity of digital transmissions, will allow viewers to see movies when they want without having to trundle off to the local Blockbuster. There will be a plethora of speciality and audio channels, round-the-clock sport, pornography, cartoons and educational programming.

Media consultants say that digital TV delivered by satellite is the most lucrative new business opportunity in the media industry, and many of the biggest players in the sector are scrambling to get a piece of the action. Kevin Narain, a digital TV expert at Price Waterhouse, says: "It is the hot topic of the moment."

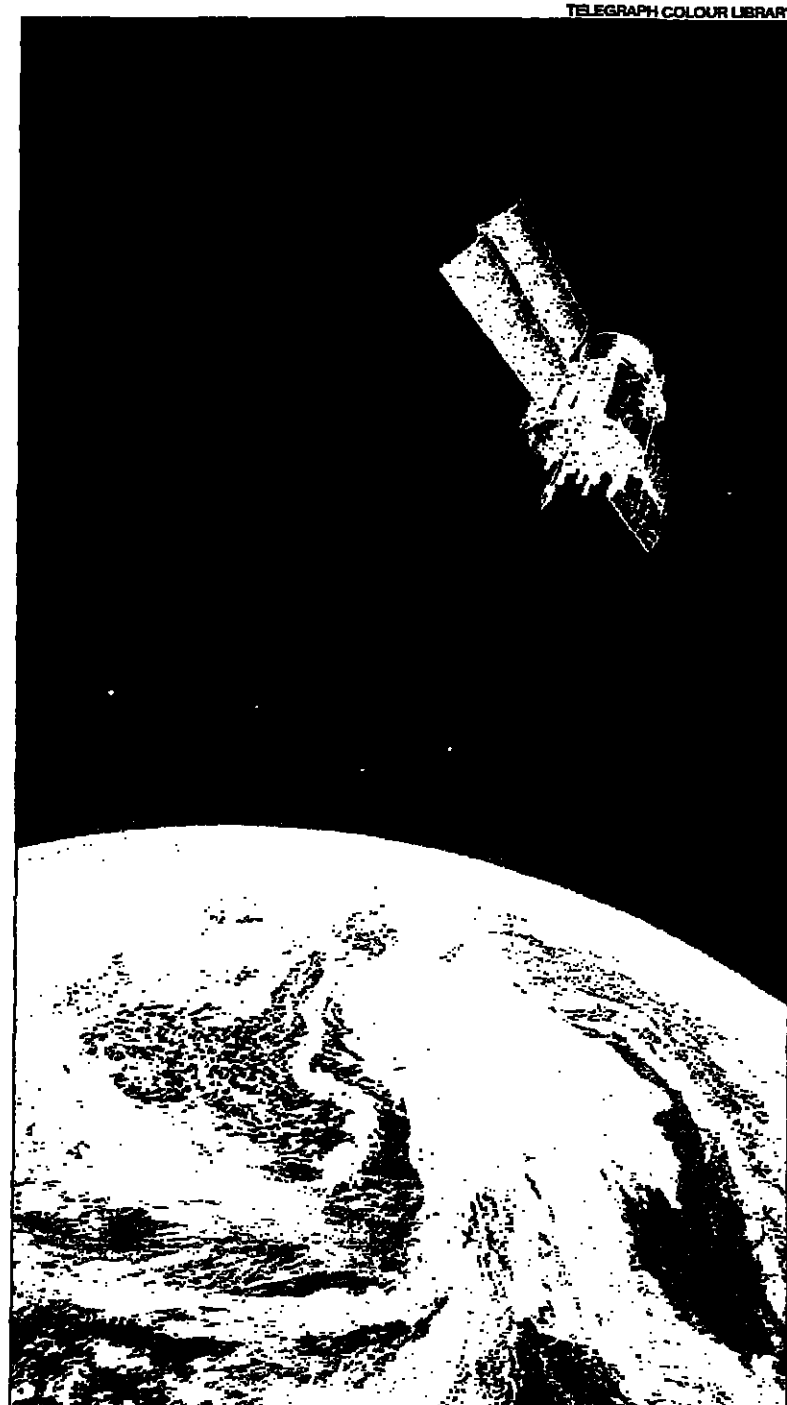
The high interest in the sector was signalled last week when DirecTV, the digital broadcasting company owned by the Hughes Electronics subsidiary of General Motors, made it known that it intends to launch a European service.

The competition will be formidable. DirecTV will be pitted against some of the biggest names in the industry — Kirch and Bertelsmann of Germany, CLT of Luxembourg, Havas and Canal Plus of France and BSkyB of Britain. They all have plans to supplement their analogue services with digital broadcasting and are busy forming partnerships to get there first. BSkyB, 40 per cent of which is owned by News International, owner of The Times, has said it could start some digital services in Britain next year.

Winning the race will take a combination of careful planning, bold moves and above all, lots of money. The partnerships will have to lease transponder space on satellites, bid for content such as Hollywood movies and football, decide on which decoder technology to adopt for the set-top boxes, and put subscriber management and billing systems into place. Price Waterhouse says the costs could run into hundreds of millions of pounds.

What is the advantage of digital broadcasting? Choice, control and convenience, the industry's mantra, are the primary benefits.

A technological marvel called digital compression will make hundreds of channels available. Filling them will be the challenge. Certainly, the arrival of digital TV will trigger the development of dozens of speciality channels catering to every eccentric in the land. There will be channels for trout fishermen,



Digital TV delivered by satellite presents a lucrative opportunity

train spotters, gardeners, twitters and collectors of stamps and war memorabilia. There will also be audio-only channels, feeding jazz, blues and gospel music directly into your stereo system.

But consultants say that greater choice in the big three — movies, sport and sex — will be the real drivers of digital TV. A non-interactive service called near video on demand, in which the same movie is beamed down separate channels at, say, 30-minute intervals, will allow viewers to see movies more or less when they want.

The possibilities in sport are endless. A subscriber could buy a package with channels devoted to American basketball or all manner of European football, such as the European Champions Cup. The more sophisticated digital set-top boxes will allow "impulse" pay-per-view purchases. Currently, pay-per-view customers must phone in their orders well before the event.

Eventually, channels devoted to electronic commerce, interactive banking and Internet services will appear. DirecTV has already formed a division called DirectPC, which will use satellite transmissions to download vast quantities of information into personal computers. Mr Narain, of Price Waterhouse, says a service such as this "is the unquantifiable upside in digital TV".

The obstacles, at least at this stage, are equally daunting. Developing the right technology for the digital set-top boxes is perhaps the biggest problem. Ideally, the boxes should be able to function anywhere in Europe and receive transmissions from competing broadcasters in both digital satellite and digital terrestrial form. Pace Micro Technology, a British company that intends to float on the London Stock Exchange by the summer, is developing a single decoder that can be used to unscramble both types of signals.

Getting it wrong could prove disastrous. Consultants estimate that such

boxes will initially cost £400 to £600 apiece. At that price, viewers will want a box that will not have to be replaced in a year if the technology changes. And unless the prices come down, or are heavily subsidised by the broadcasters or the programme providers, the success of digital TV cannot be assured.

In America, digital satellite TV is taking root at amazing speed. No fewer than four services — DirecTV, United States Satellite Broadcasting Company, Primostar Partners and EchoStar Corporation — are either up and running or planning to launch soon.

DirecTV is the leader at the moment. Started 18 months ago by Hughes, the satellite communications and aerospace company, DirecTV has about 1.4 million subscribers and expects to double that number by the end of the year. It has 175 channels and owes much of its growth to its coverage of National Football League games. DirecTV's basic news, sports and movies package costs about \$30 a month. The satellite dish and the set-top box can add another \$700 to the bill.

In January, DirecTV received a vote of confidence when AT&T, America's biggest phone company, bought a 2.5 per cent stake for \$137.5 million, valuing it at a lofty \$5.5 billion even though no profits are in sight. AT&T has an option to boost its stake to 30 per cent over five years, depending on how many DirecTV customers it recruits.

Hughes has made international expansion a priority for DirecTV. In partnership with four South American media and telecom companies, an offshoot called DirecTV International has just launched a 200-channel Spanish and Portuguese service called Galaxy Latin America. It will compete with a similar service started by The News Corporation, Tele-Telecomunicaciones Inc of America, Organizaciones Globo of Brazil and Grupo Televisa of Mexico. Next year, DirecTV International plans to launch DirecTV Japan.

DirecTV International hopes to announce the formation of a European partnership in the near future. Celso Azevedo, senior vice-president, would not provide details but thinks the deep pockets of Hughes and its own track record give it a competitive advantage. He says: "We are the only digital TV company that has put together a system for millions of subscribers for more than 100 channels. We've done it in the US and in Latin America."

DirecTV International does not plan to challenge BSkyB in Britain because of its commanding position in satellite broadcasting. The market in continental Europe is wide open, but it will have to move quickly. NetHold, a Dutch TV company owned by Multichoice of South Africa and Richmond, the Swiss luxury goods maker behind Dunhill and Cartier, has already started a limited digital service and has obtained the rights to Italian soccer. It wants to expand in Europe.

Meanwhile, the big German and French media players are lining up their partners and their programming rights. Bidding wars for content are inevitable. "You will see a lot of companies competing for some fairly scarce resources," Mr Narain says. "The fight for the digital TV consumer has just begun."

Tories arrive at a turning point over their conflicting views on employment

Government statistics on manufacturing jobs have been telling the wrong story, says Philip Bassett



William Waldegrave, left, and Ian Lang, trying to resolve "puzzle" of job discrepancies

grew by 6.2 per cent last year in the second half of the year in particular it tailed off to 2 per cent by mid-summer, 1.6 per cent by the autumn and to 0.6 per cent in January, the last available figures.

CBI and other survey-based figures from business tell a similar story, and though manufacturers are forecasting an increase in output, such expectations have been unrealised in each quarterly CBI survey for the past year —

what CBI officials call the "disappointment gap". According to the CBI, manufacturing employment has fallen throughout the 1990s, save for October last year when the net balance of companies reporting job cuts turned to a 3 per cent positive figure. Since then, the balance has plummeted, with yesterday's 14 per cent fall the sharpest for two years.

Although the Government's figures for the recession of the

early 1990s reflected that pattern, since mid-1994 they have been telling, slightly sporadically, a story of rising employment in manufacturing. Since June 1994, official figures suggest there have been five quarters of rising numbers of manufacturing jobs, and two of jobs going — a net increase of 77,000 jobs.

Its separate monthly estimates say the same sort of thing — 14 monthly increases, seven monthly falls, a net rise

of 5,000 (a different order of increase but a similar pattern). The quarterly Labour Force Survey, a household rather than employer-based sample, shows a rise of 112,000 in the year to last February.

Business economists have suggested that such figures are suspect, and likely to be revised — the non-LFS ones at least — to bring them into line with what business has been reporting. That process is what Mr Lang now seems to be engaged on, with his officials suggesting that "either manufacturers are extremely optimistic about future prospects or that we should expect to see employment falling over the next few months".

Officials of the CBI are running out of words to describe the poor picture that its recent surveys are painting: originally a "pause" in growth — before yesterday's survey officials did consider whether they could use the phrase "lengthening pause" — the CBI's reports were peppered with words like "flat", "level", "static" and "standstill".

Hardly optimistic language, and suggesting that in the case of employment in manufacturing industry, it looks like business has been right, and the Government wrong. The process of turning round on such a point is awkward and embarrassing, especially when it is paraded across newspaper front pages; but it may be that Mr Lang and his officials are listening hard to business — and suggesting that the Treasury, and the rest of the Government, do likewise, however awkward and however embarrassing.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Plain speaking on the clarity of NatWest's annual reports

From the Company Secretary, NatWest Group
Sir, Mr Penton, in his letter (April 18), commented on a few accounting pages in our annual review not carrying Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark.

Each year more and more of our pages are earning the Crystal Mark. This year over 80 per cent did. We hope this number will increase still further as we continue our pioneering work with Plain English Campaign. However, by law the accounting pages must contain certain technical terms and this is why the Crystal Mark does not apply to them. But we still take care to make these pages as clear as possible.

Many of the technical terms are explained in a glossary, which does carry the Crystal Mark. We wrote

to 5,000 of our shareholders asking for their opinion. They are overwhelmingly in favour of what we have done, and say using plain English is a real help. No shareholder has said they have found any difficulty in understanding the pages.

As well as the annual review, our annual meeting notice and shareholders' voting card also carry the Crystal Mark.

We are also asking our shareholders to adopt a new set of Articles which will be the first Articles ever written in plain English with the Crystal Mark. We believe this demonstrates a genuine and growing commitment to plain speaking.

Yours faithfully,
P. J. S. HAMMONDS,
Company Secretary,
NatWest Group, 1st Floor,
41 Lothbury, EC2.

Apprenticeships were hard but worth it

From Mr Gilbert Bealing
Sir, T. P. Hartley was absolutely right to extol the benefits of the apprenticeship system to individuals and the state (Return to apprenticeships needed, March 28).

My working-class parents sacrificed family income in order to apprentice their three sons to mechanical engineering. To further their technical education my elder brother and I, for some three years and after a hard day's slog on the shop floor, pedal-cycled 24 miles return to the Guildhall, Bath, for two hours of evening classes. Three evenings weekly, all year round, all weathers and back to work at 7.30 next morning.

My first year's wage was four shillings weekly, in 1922, rising to 19 shillings in my fifth year. Left-wingers

would call this slave labour, but I felt privileged to be taught the groundwork of my future livelihood without a premium charge for it.

With our first employer we progressed through site installations, drawing office and to area representative positions. My brother became a managing director-chairman and I the chief sales engineer for London, both posts by invitation from our second separate companies in mechanical handling. Our non-studious middle brother became a superintendent toolmaker. The system certainly worked for us. Strangely, my main tutor at Bath was also named Hartley.

Yours faithfully,
GILBERT BEALING,
St Michael's Cottage,
28 Digby,
St Ives, Cornwall.

Change social attitude to unemployment

From Mr A. G. Phillips
Sir, The one subject upon which the world's politicians have a consensus is the need to "cure" unemployment. Now we have Jacques Santer (EU launches \$1.3bn aid for small business, April 11) offering \$1.3 billion to create 30,000 jobs within the community.

Employment is a means to an end, not an end in itself, and merely providing yet more goods and services which people do not want, let alone need, is sheer profligacy. Not so long ago we needed child labour and slavery was rife. In times of crisis we needed press gangs and conscription. Yet technology is taking the place not just of manual work, but tasks which require great skill.

Even the defence of the realm is being achieved with

far fewer personnel. The advance of automation and computerisation is unstoppable, and pretending that we can continue to find jobs — real jobs — for all those displaced is fanciful.

Unemployment is not always to be deprecated. Without millions who give freely of their time, most valuable organisations such as charities, educational establishments and even hospitals would collapse. What we need is not more boring, stressful and nugatory work schemes, but a change in social attitudes to employment and an imaginative alternative to income tax as a method of financing government projects.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY G. PHILLIPS,
32 Upper Street,
Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Why endure a long, hard slog to London and the hassle of a crowded airport?

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines can connect you with over 150 worldwide destinations from your local airport.

So next time you want to fly from the UK, call your travel agent and take the easy way out. With KLM.

The Reliable Airline





John McCarthy, left, chairman, with Matthew Thorne, finance director of McCarthy & Stone, reported a rise in profits to £2.1 million despite problems over planning permission

Standard to sell private banking arm to Swiss

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

STANDARD Chartered has reached an agreement in principle to sell its international private banking arm to Swiss Bank Corporation (SBC) for an estimated £150 million.

The banks were forced to disclose their plans after news of the deal leaked in the Far East, where the private banking operation is based.

Analysts estimated the price at about £150 million, based on a multiple of ten times the

division's £15 million contribution to Standard's pre-tax profits. Surprise was expressed yesterday at Standard's willingness to sell its private banking arm, given the obvious overlaps with the bank's Far Eastern personal banking business.

However, Standard said: "It is not one of our core activities. It has been run as an independent unit dealing with high net worth individuals. We are

concentrating on where we have real strengths, which is in retail, corporate and institutional banking, treasury and custodian services."

The business, which has 4,000 individual clients and about £3.3 billion of funds under management, has been managed as part of Standard's investment banking business from whose clients it derived much of its business.

Analysts said that Standard

would have had to increase its investment in the private banking business if it had wanted to keep up with competitors that were investing substantial sums in new private banking systems.

The private banking operation was too small to compete with bigger names. But investment in Standard's personal and priority banking operations has been given a higher priority. In a joint statement,

the banks said that the sale of the private banking business was part of Standard's strategy of focusing on key activities and followed the disposal of its fund management, trust and securities companies.

Most recently, Standard agreed to sell 80 per cent of its loss-making securities operation to Thailand's Nava Securities.

The two banks added that the sale was also in keeping with SBC's strategy "of expanding its market share in an important, key business and in what it considers one of the most attractive growth regions in the world".

In the statement, the banks said that completion of the deal would depend on detailed contract negotiations and that further announcements would not be made for some time.

There are also regulatory issues in the seven countries in which it operates. Agreement on the details of a sale is not expected before July.

The private banking business operates in Hong Kong, Singapore, Geneva, Jersey, Taiwan, Vancouver and Dubai.

SBC also disclosed yesterday that it had acquired a \$1 billion portfolio of private client relationships from Chase Manhattan Private Bank. Under the deal, 15 Chase managers will join SBC in New York and Miami.

McCarthy & Stone ahead 50%

By FRASER NELSON

MCARTHY & STONE, Britain's biggest builder of sheltered housing for the elderly, is paying its first interim dividend since 1992 after achieving a 50 per cent increase in profits.

Yesterday the company reported a rise in profits to £2.1 million from £1.4 million in the half year to February 29 and announced a dividend of 0.55p a share.

The continued fall of land prices and building costs saw its margins erode up a point to 34 per cent. Operating profits rose 15 per cent to £2.3 million despite a 3.6 per cent dip in sales to £24.2 million.

The group has had difficulty in gaining planning permission to build its sheltered housing. Matthew Thorne, finance director, blamed what he described as "not in my backyard syndrome".

"This attitude is not just stifling the growth of our company but every other building business in the country. These councils are protecting buildings which have no economic future and no viable independent life."

Having sustained high margins, the group is now aiming for volume growth. Mr Thorne added that, with 70 per cent of the sheltered housing market, the company was well placed to benefit from the predicted "granny boom", a 17.5 per cent rise in the number of over-80s in the UK by 2001. He forecast that full-year profits would be in line with expectations.

Lapthorne for AI chairman

By ERIC REGULY

RICHARD Lapthorne, the finance director of British Aerospace, is to replace Sir Edwin Nixon as chairman of Amersham International, the health sciences company.

Mr Lapthorne, 53, who has been a non-executive director of Amersham since 1987, will take over after the company's annual meeting in mid-July. The move, however, does not signal a shake-up at BAE.

Mr Lapthorne will remain as finance director of BAE, where he has worked closely with Dick Evans, the chief executive, in turning the company round.

He has always said he has no desire to replace Mr Evans. It appears that Mr Evans will remain as chairman at least until 1998, when the contract of Bob Bauman, the chairman, expires.

Sir Edwin, 70, was appointed a director of Amersham in 1987 and became chairman a year later.

The company, which specialises in healthcare and diagnostics products, went through a roller-coaster ride after its privatisation but now seems to have found its footing. Sir Edwin's international experience will be valued at the company.

House prices in Scotland hit by sharp fall in 1995

By ROBERT MILLER

HOMEOWNERS in Scotland saw the average value of their home fall by £2,500 in 1995, according to the new Scottish Housing Index, published yesterday.

A joint survey by the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and Scottish Homes, the national housing agency, on every house purchase north of the border found that the "housing recession in Scotland in 1995 was worse than had previously been suggested".

Launching the index, Lord Younger of Prestwick, the former Cabinet minister and

now chairman of RBS, said that the house price decline had been reversed and that there had been a significant upturn in the first quarter of this year. The strength of the housing market recovery in Scotland remains variable, however, with Glasgow recording the strongest gains while Edinburgh remains sluggish. In Aberdeen, the oil capital of the north, and Dundee, prices continue to show a downward trend.

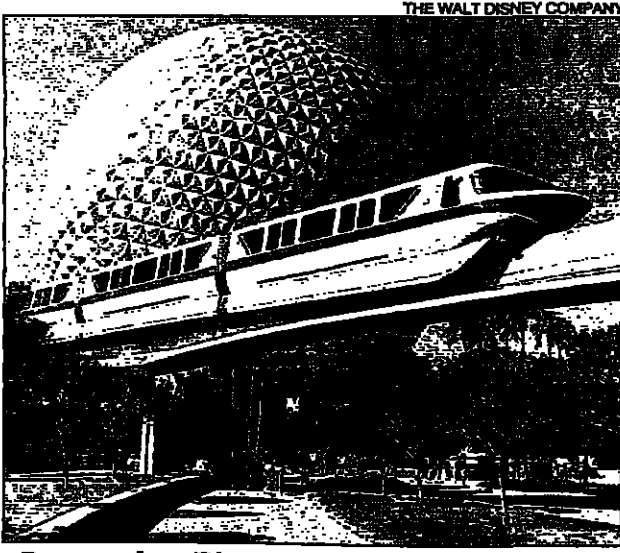
Lord Younger said the Scottish Housing Index would "make a substantial contribu-

tion to reducing uncertainty and lack of confidence, which has been one of the greatest single restraints on the market. It will be of direct benefit to homeowners, who will be able to make house moves with a much better knowledge of their local housing market."

Buying a house in Scotland differs from England and Wales in that, where more than one person is interested in a property, sealed bids must be submitted before a predetermined deadline and the house goes to the highest bidder.

Disney incurs loss after \$525m costs

By OUR CITY STAFF



Revenues from Disney's theme parks rose 15 per cent

WALT DISNEY reported a \$25 million loss for the second quarter after taking \$525 million in charges for an accounting change and for costs related to its acquisition of ABC/Capital Cities Inc.

The giant American entertainment company yesterday said the charges reduced its net income in the quarter from \$268 million, or 47 cents a share, to a loss of \$25 million, or 4 cents a share. The company had net income of \$316 million, or 60 cents a share, in the second quarter of the previous year.

Disney provided \$300 million against a new method of accounting for long-lived assets and a \$225 million charge

for costs related to the acquisition of ABC/Capital Cities in February.

The charges reduced the company's six-month profit to \$472 million, or 86 cents a share, from \$765 million, or \$1.39 a share. In the same period last year, Disney earned \$798 million, or \$1.51 a share.

Total revenues jumped 54 per cent to \$4.54 billion from \$2.95 billion in the quarter, while six-month revenues climbed from \$6.25 billion to \$8.38 billion.

Revenues from creative content, such as film and television production, grew by 26 per cent from \$1.93 billion to \$2.42 billion, while revenues

from the company's theme parks and resorts expanded by 15 per cent from \$920 million to \$1.1 billion.

The acquisition of Capital Cities, which owns the ABC television network and ESPN sports cable channel, sent Disney's revenues from broadcasting soaring to \$1.1 billion from \$101 million in the quarter.

Disney also announced that its directors had approved the adoption of a new stock repurchase programme that will allow it to buy up to 104.5 million shares. The new programme replaces a similar one that was in place prior to the acquisition of Capital Cities.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

071-782 7344

LEGAL NOTICES

No 001746 of 1995

In the High Court of Justice

Chancery Division - Companies Court

In the Matter of

ICI CHEMICALS & FERTILISERS

LIMITED

and in the Matter of

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition

written by Sir Edwin Nixon, Chairman of

ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers Limited, was

presented to the High Court of Justice, Chancery

Division, on the 24th day of March 1995, for

an order for the liquidation of the said

ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers Limited, and for

an order for the appointment of a Liquidator

of the said ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers Limited,

and for an order for the appointment of a

Receiver of the said ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers

Limited, and for an order for the appointment

of a Receiver of the said ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers

Limited, and for an order for the appointment

of a Receiver of the said ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers

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Limited, and for an order for the appointment

of a Receiver of the said ICI Chemicals & Fertilisers

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Shake-up boosts North East Co-op

By OUR CITY STAFF

NORTH EASTERN CO-OP reported pre-tax profits last year of £7.1 million, rising from £5 million.

This followed a restructuring of one of northeast England's biggest businesses, including the disposal of several loss-making centres, resulting in borrowings falling from £22.1 million to £12.2 million, while other outlets were redeveloped.

Neil Arnold, chief executive, said: "These positive results were produced in the face of continuing difficulties within the retail trade generally." He said all major retail chains had been involved in "a ferocious price war".

Food sales at the Co-op's 126 supermarkets and supermarkets

amounted to £240.3 million (£263.7 million), but the division's net profits improved. Sales at 18 car dealerships and filling stations reached £93.2 million (£86.3 million), while new and used car sales were up from 5,280 to 5,784.

Fundamental group sales amounted to £15.9 million (£15.3 million), and new funeral homes were launched at Darlington, Co Durham, and Borden, Tyne and Wear. The ten department stores in the non-food division continued to be affected by the slow housing market and sales fell from £28.9 million to £22.2 million.

A total of £811,000 (£586,000) was returned to members in the form of dividends or interest on their shares.

You can win an adventure holiday for two every year for life

Bungy-jump for thrill of a lifetime



If the thrill of bungy-jumping at Victoria Falls appeals to you, then our spirit of adventure competition will, too. The Times, in association with Exodus Travels, gives you the chance to win an adventure holiday for two every year for life. The winner can choose £1,000 worth of holidays for two from 200 adventures in 65 countries.

The bungy-jumping adventure happens on the Nairobi-Harare expedition which lasts for five weeks. The trip takes in the world's greatest natural zoo, Ngorongoro crater in Tanzania, the extraordinary ruins of Great Zimbabwe, neolithic cave paintings at Rhodes-Matopos National Park and safaris in Botswana and the Okavango delta. DEPARTURES: May 14, July 2, Sept 24, Oct 1 and Nov 28. PRICE: £1050-£1090. Ask for dossier VNH.

HOW TO ENTER OUR PRIZE DRAW

To win £1,000 each off an adventure holiday for life for two, collect 15 of the 18 tokens appearing every day in The Times until May 4. Send them with the completed entry form to: The Times/Exodus Adventure Holidays Prize Draw, 16, Whitefriars St, London, EC8B 2NG. Closing date: May 15, 1996.

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try harder

Equities close off their lows

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996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## LONDON PROPERTY

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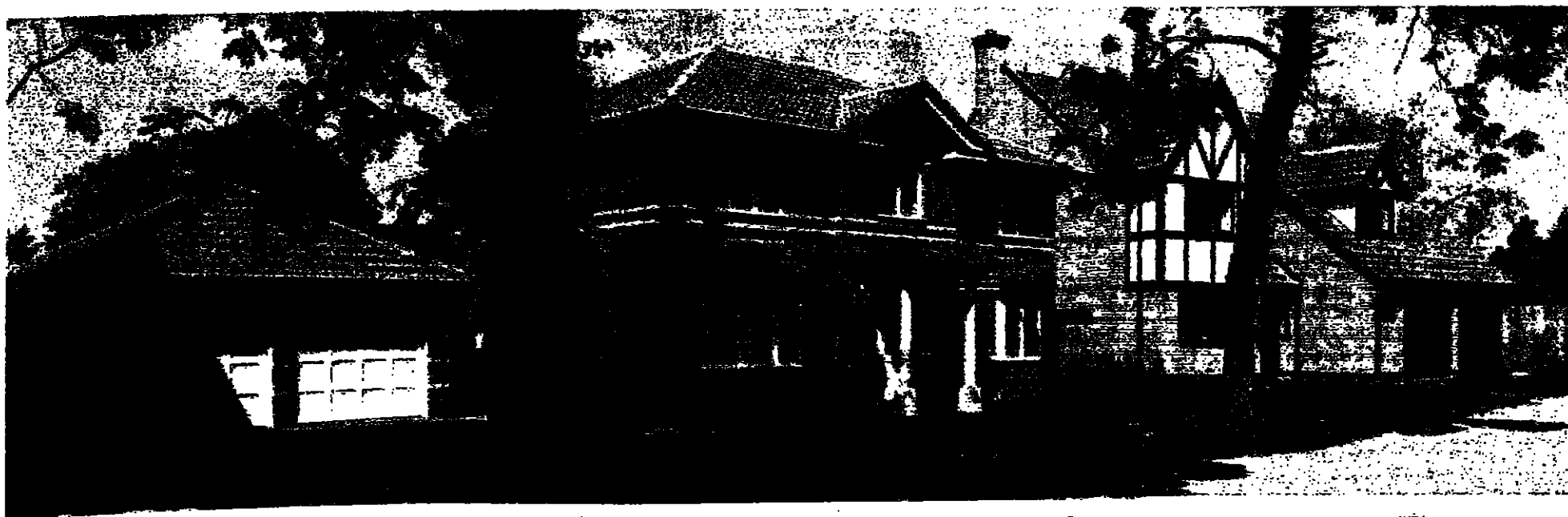
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## THEATRE 1



**F. Murray Abraham grows his beard and dyes his hair, as he makes his West End debut playing Tolstoy**

## THEATRE 2



**Twelve Angry Men may be a period melodrama but, as its West End revival shows, it still has the power to grip**

## THE TIMES ARTS

## POP



**Lloyd Cole is a stylish singer and writer, but his London gig was an unpretentious and workmanlike affair**

## TOMORROW



**A Shakespearean monster in Fascist Britain: Ian McKellen brings his *Richard III* to the big screen**

Actor F. Murray Abraham and Tolstoy are soon to be seen on the London stage. Carol Allen reports

# Salieri out for the Count

Meeting F. Murray Abraham in the flesh is a bit of a shock. From his film roles, such as Salieri in *Amadeus* and the Inquisitor in *The Name of the Rose*, one expects a dark, rather saturnine figure of ascetic and somewhat forbidding bearing. What you get is a relaxed and jovial man with a warmly welcoming manner and flowing grey hair and beard, making him look rather like a junior Santa Claus or biblical patriarch.

"I get treated quite differently looking this way," he says. "People try to help me cross the street and the women who give me the eye are a little bit older."

The hair and beard have been specially grown and dyed for his West End debut role as Tolstoy in the world premiere of James Goldman's new play about the last days of the great Russian novelist. Like his best-known play *The Lion in Winter*, which took the lid off the home life of Henry II, Goldman's new work deals with the tempestuous marriage of its central character.

"It's a love story," Abraham says. "Full of passion, very explosive. It's about two people who cannot live together and cannot live apart."

Tolstoy, as presented in Goldman's play, is a vigorous 82-year-old, chafing under the devoted but smothering love of his wife Sonya. It was a marriage which had lasted for 48 years. Abraham, who celebrated the 35th anniversary of his marriage to Kate this month, identifies with the fact that lifelong intimacy is not the easiest of journeys.

"What makes long-term relationships so very difficult is that we are constantly changing, and sometimes we change into people who simply do not get along any longer," he says. "About every seven years we go through this crisis — or at least I do, and I really believe that my marriage is over. I have to leave."

"And then we get through it and we continue. If you can maintain a relationship over a long period of time it's an enormous stroke of luck and very hard work, but it's a great thing. To turn one's back on 30 or more years of joint history is a tragedy."

Another aspect of Tolstoy with which Abraham empathises was his Slavic temperament. "I've spent quite a bit of time in Russia and I was born into the same religion as many Russians. I'm Syrian Orthodox, same as Greek Orthodox, so I feel very strongly connected to them. They truly do



"As I get closer to 60," says F. Murray Abraham, "I begin to look at myself and my career the way Tolstoy does in the play, looking at the end of his life"

explode into tears before your eyes."

Abraham is a first-generation American, raised on the border of Texas and Mexico. "My mother is from Calabria in southern Italy, whose people are known as *capadocce* — 'hard headed' — which I am. My father's Syrian and they are the most stubborn of all the Arab people."

F. Murray (the F stands for Fahrid) was a 17-year-old high school student on the brink of getting involved in the street gang life when one of his teachers suggested he should try acting. "I had no idea what the theatre was and for some reason she saw something in me. I believe it was the hand of God, because I immediately knew where I belonged."

The hand of God appeared again when the little-known theatre actor was cast by Milos Forman as the malcontent Salieri in *Amadeus*. The part won Abraham an Academy Award and changed his life. "Suddenly it was world fame. It wasn't a question of looking for work, but of deciding which job I wanted."

But the film roles he was offered soon pricked the euphoric bubble. "I was offered rapists, maniac killers and wife-beaters, so I chose to continue in theatre. And if you say 'no' often enough to Hollywood they stop knocking on your door."

There were a few good films, such as *The Name of the Rose*, but there were others, which Abraham cheerfully describes as 'real stinkers', that he did for the money. "I needed it and it was available, large sums of money unimaginable before the Academy Award. I began to amass for the future and think less and less about the roles I was doing — colossal epic adventures in Russia; three days' work in the middle of Africa for a huge amount of money because I was so prominent at the time. Then I'd come home and play

off-off-Broadway for nothing. If you do that enough it begins to warp your idea of what your talent means; you exploit yourself. But I and my family did get to see the world."

Over the past decade Abraham has played many of the great classical and modern roles in theatre, from Chekhov to Beckett. He has also worked his way through much of the Shakespearean canon — Iago, Malvolio, Lear, Macbeth and his favourite, Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But, until now, his long-cherished ambition to appear on the London stage eluded him.

One of the things he is relishing about working with English actors is their level-headed attitude to their work. "In America we're almost messianic in our pursuit of excellence in the theatre. I now think that's unhealthy, and the

company I'm working with here constantly reminds me, through the way they work, that although it's very important it is just theatre."

Meanwhile, the movie roles are growing more worthwhile. Abraham can currently be seen in *Mighty Aphrodite*, a film which took him to Sicily to play the leader of the Greek chorus which comments on the foolishness of Manhattan man. "I now know why people work with Woody Allen again and again," he says. "It's so calm on the set, so comfortable. He is very aware of who he is and what he wants to get done, and everyone else is magnetised around him and does precisely what he wants."

He also enthuses about Australia, where he has just played a supporting role in *Children of the Revolution*, with Judy Davis and Sam Neill. "My wife and I liked it so much that we stayed for a month afterwards. I play Josef Stalin as a song-and-dance man. We had a lot of laughs and I think it's going to be a wonderful movie."

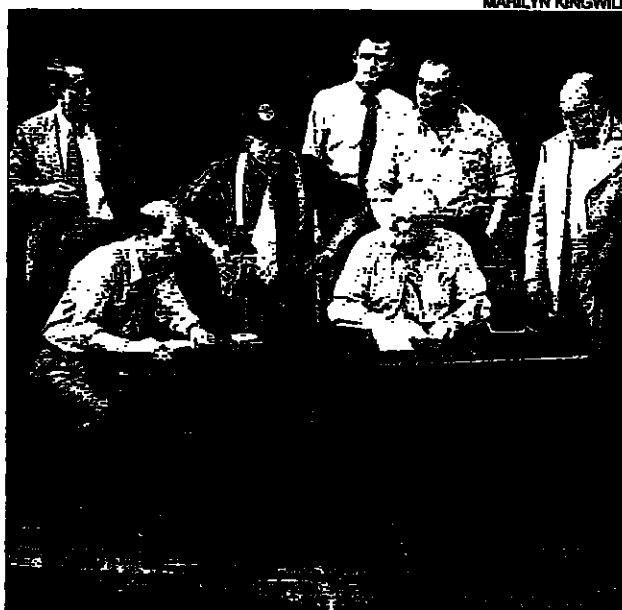
From the way he talks about

**"I used to be this tortured man. To hell with all that"**

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale cheers as justice triumphs over bigotry

## Making the heart grow Fonda

**Twelve Angry Men Comedy**



Seven angry men consider their verdict once again

I suspect that Sidney Lumet's great movie, *Twelve Angry Men*, has inspired as many upbeat fantasies as any cowboy thriller. Shut your eyes and you are the infinitely right-minded Henry Fonda. All 11 of your fellow jurors agree that the 16-year-old boy in the dock is guilty of killing his father, and you, only you, think he should not instantly be sent to the chair in Sing Sing. You argue, cajole, make a few clever points — but I had better not reveal the ending, in case two or three people out there do not know it.

Can I be personal for a moment? I found myself questioning the *Twelve Angry Men* myth when I sat on a jury recently and found I was the only member convinced that the defendant was guilty of theft. It was deeply disconcerting to be the lion in a den of Fondas. In defiance of my dreams, I was participating in a documentary called *Twelve Credulous and Mild-Mannered Men and Women*.

However, Harold Pinter's revival of the play on which Lumet based his film is strong and sure enough to restore conviction and power to what I still think a pretty improbable tale. Indeed, let's go further. On the first night, I found myself half-believing again in reason, openness of mind, curiosity, perseverance, moral

courage and the other qualities with which the author, Reginald Rose, wanted to confront the America of 1954. Given some of the wayward verdicts his nation's jurors have recently handed down, not to mention the fact that even New York may soon start executing its convicted felons, they are virtues worth pondering in 1996.

Mark you, Rose's jurors are not merely the representative spread of New York citizenry that elementary justice demands. They are a cross-section of stereotypes: wimpish bank-clerk, dopey baseball fanatic, pernickety immigrant watchmaker, big bully, small

er bully, salt-of-the-earth builder, and a Wall Street financier played in so wonderfully wintry a way by Timothy West that to look at him is to come down with pneumonia. But then there is not a weak performance onstage, and several strikingly assured ones, starting with Kevin Whately in the Fonda role and culminating with Peter Vaughan and Tony Haygarth as his main opponents.

Whatley avoids the danger inherent in his role, which is priggishness. Quietly, unpretentiously, incisively he makes the men sweating in the boiling jury-room (a dowdy brown set from Eileen Diss) inspect

this fact, prod that witness's claim. And the tension builds and builds as a seamless prosecution case starts to unravel and doubt begins to seem reasonable. What makes this doubly enjoyable is that Whately's foes keep shooting their own feet. How can you believe a juror who refuses to agree that an adolescent yell of "I'll kill you" may mean nothing when he himself inadvertently uses it in a moment of fury?

This does of course re-emphasise that Rose's plot is subtler than his characterisation. Should one of the two most intransigent crusaders for conviction really be a heavy father anxious for vicarious revenge on his own disobedient son? Psychopathology is usually less blatant than that.

Should the other denounce slum dwellers as scum that should be flushed down the city drains in the interests of law, order, health and population control? Neo-fascism was surely more guileful, even in the McCarthy era.

But when Haygarth contemptuously lets rip, or Vaughan scowls and rants, you are likely to find yourself suspending your disbelief. In each case reason and rage have come frighteningly to the surface. *Twelve Angry Men* is a melodrama, yes; but it is one that, 40-odd years after it was written, still grips, still startles, still chills.

● This review appeared in late editions yesterday

## No Commotions, in several ways

DURING *Jennifer She Said*, Lloyd Cole broke a string on his acoustic guitar. Dramatically whipping the instrument over his head, he thrust it out at arm's length to have it replaced by a roadie. But none came. After several frantic gestures to left and right, the singer gave up trying to attract his staff's attention and simply soldiered on as best he could.

It was a telling episode in a gig that was surprisingly prone to amateur-hour equipment problems. For, although the 35-year-old Cole is one of the most stylish singer-songwriters Britain has produced — the unlikely link between Lou Reed and Mark Knopfler — he remains the most ineffectual personality in pop.

Even so, his most recent album, *Love Story*, deservedly earned him some of the best reviews since his 1984 debut, *Rattlesnakes*. And, despite the decline in his fortunes since the mid-1980s, Cole commands an utterly devoted following sufficient to fill the 2,100-capacity Forum on a rainy Monday night.

Cole was an awkward presence, constantly fidgeting and kicking away his guitar lead, which kept getting tangled at his feet. The stage appeared to be too big for his four-piece

**Lloyd Cole Forum, NWS**

band, whose equipment was drawn up into a larger in the middle. But any feeling of intimacy among the musicians was torpedoed by an alternately dull and garish light-show, which included bizarre overdoses of blinding red light that effectively rendered any human activity invisible during *Be There and Forest Fire*.

The sound, however, was crisp and clear, and Cole reproduced the recorded versions of new songs such as *I Didn't Know That You Cared* and *Sentimental Fool* and old favourites such as *Cut Me Down* and *Perfect Skin* with polished precision, if little passion.

By the time they wound up with a slightly rearranged version of *Are You Ready To Be Heartbroken* the ice had been sufficiently broken. But as a show it was only marginally less wet than the journey home.

DAVID SINCLAIR

## All four the best

FUTURE Music Records, the label for which the pianists Liam Noble, Howard Riley, Peter Jacobsen and John Law record, is dedicated to documenting the more enterprising end of British jazz. So it was no surprise to find everything from medieval religious music to Satie-like Impressionism mixed in with the freest improvisation at the core of each man's solo performance.

The faint echoes of Satie were provided by Noble in his own *Coal Gate Street*, a deceptively light-sounding piece, evocative and stately. The freest improvisation was delivered in its purest form by Jacobsen, one of the country's most undervalued talents, in a performance mixing rippling lyricism with sudden tumbling runs and densely textured passages of rumbling vibrato.

The most unusual music of the evening, however, came from Law. In his 45-minute set he used the simplicity of monastic music as the starting point for an exploration of the possibilities opened up by the

subtle interweaving of florid, even boppish, jazz improvisations into the plangent reverence of his source material. This was no academic exercise in reconciling two apparently incompatible traditions: Law illuminates each by exposing it to the other.

For sheer imaginative vitality, though, the concert's closing set, from Riley, was hard to beat. In three of his own pieces, *Deflections*, *Inner Mirror* and *Fast Forward*, he demonstrated his unmatched ability to use a relatively simple musical kernel as the basis for his unique improvisational approach, and his relatively conventional Bill Evans-composed conclusion only served to underline the adventurousness of the preceding music.

CHRIS PARKER

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## HERITAGE

You may think they're blots on the landscape, but the gas holders of St Pancras are a Victorian triumph



## MUSIC 1

The LSO pairs Stravinsky and Ravel in a rewarding series with guest Michael Tilson Thomas

## THE TIMES ARTS



## MUSIC 2

The Hallé comes to grips with the rigorous, specialist demands of the conductor Frans Brüggen



## MUSIC 3

A packed Purcell Room is treated to a programme of Sir Harrison Birtwistle's favourite selections

Marcus Binney cautions 'philistine' ministers against needlessly destroying landmarks on the altar of progress

# Keeping alive gas's romantic flame

Imagine it. Enough well-preserved elegant Doric columns to build two replicas of the Parthenon — and every single one to be dismantled and all too probably sold for scrap.

This extraordinary assemblage of classical columns stands proudly by the approach to St Pancras Station. It takes the form of three mighty circles of columns, three tiers high. These triplets form the noblest and most eye-catching monument of the great age of gas, when the industry gave light to streets and buildings all over London.

For 20 years they have been flamboyantly painted in black, red and white, the Victorian company livery, catching the eye of passengers approaching by train. Now they are to be carted ignominiously away as part of the Government's billion-pound "sweetener" to London & Continental Railways.

LCR, a consortium of Virgin, National Express, London Electricity, SG Warburg and others, have won the £3 billion contract to build, own and operate the new 270kph (168mph) Channel Tunnel rail link from Folkestone to London, with a new terminal within the existing St Pancras Station.

Let's be clear. There's no rival in the whole burgeoning world of industrial archaeology to this trio of gas holders, once the pride of the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Co. Brian Sturt, the industry's historian, says: "I've claimed many times that the St Pancras gas holders are unique and no one has ever contradicted me."

If they were in North America, in New York's fashionable east iron district, they would be acclaimed as a triumph of 19th-century architecture. As it is they are Grade II listed and when the idea of a second Channel Tunnel terminal at St Pancras was first mooted, Union Railways (the current custodian) talked of dismantling and re-erecting them near by.

Now the Government is applying strong pressure to stop any such requirement being included in the parliamentary Bill, which will transfer St Pancras and 34 acres to Richard Branson's winning consortium. This is in sharp contrast to policy in Kent, where undertakings have been given, and are being honoured, to dismantle and re-erect listed buildings in the path of the new fast link.

Sturt continues: "When gas holders were first built here in the 1820s by the canal there was no railway." That came later when the mighty Midland Railway blasted its way through the slums of north London to build a terminus eclipsing its rivals at King's Cross and Euston.

The Imperial Gas Company was left with a very restricted site. The



Gas holders overlooking the canal at King's Cross in London contribute to the industrial archaeology of the capital and provide a monument to the great age of gas

only way to increase storage capacity was to go up. Usually the lifts of a telescopic gas holder were 20-40ft high. Here they are 55ft. The second lift was added in 1880, bringing the total height to over 100ft. Building upwards, he adds, also meant digging down to create a tank 55ft deep for the holder or bell to sink into when deflated.

This was a great era of growth in the industry. In the 1860s the use of gas widened with the introduction of the water geyser in 1865, the gas cooking ring in 1867 and the gas fire with radiants in 1880.

The cylinders were erected to the design of John Kirkham, the company's chief engineer. The company minute books for 1860 credit the idea for three holders to Methven, the engineer who supervised the construction.

Philip Davies, of English Heri-

tage, says: "The St Pancras trio are a masterpiece of Victorian engineering and a spectacular London landmark. Just imagine what an architect like Sir Norman Foster or Sir Richard Rogers could do with them." As it happens, Sir Norman has designed an elegant circular Telematic Centre in the German town of Duisburg in a drum shape that would fit snugly within the colonnades.

But the sheer romantic value of the open silhouette against the sky must be safeguarded, as well as a glimpse of the ingenious winning of the rings. Where they touch, the columns — 46ft tall below and 33ft feet above — have guide rails. The silhouette is further enriched by nearly 5,000ft of lattice girders.

According to English Heritage, dismantling and re-erection has been costed at £3.5 million, exclud-

ing land. As it happens, a perfect alternative site is close by in South Goods Way already in British Gas ownership, with a fourth listed gas frame and space for the endangered three. British Gas, whose heritage responsibilities are far smaller than public utilities such as the canals and the railways, should contribute to the cost. It is the monument to an industry that Britain pioneered. Sensitive re-erection, they could surprise and delight every foreign visitor arriving in London on the new fast track.

Sir Neil Cossons, director of the Science Museum, says: "They have a tremendous landscape value. Re-erecting them would be really worthwhile."

It has been suggested that the trio should be re-erected in the millennium exhibition site at Greenwich, where their shape would fit with the

theme of time and the proposed circle of 12 pavilions in a form of a clock face. But their reason for being lies at St Pancras, beside the canal and the railway, where they served as the backdrop to innumerable films of Dickensian and cockney London, including such masterpieces as *The Ladykillers*.

Cast iron is now recognised as one of the delights of 19th-century architecture. Its greatest monument, Crystal Palace, has long vanished, but all over the world, from Australia to Argentina, British cast iron is to be found in glorious abundance, revered as an ornament to streets and cities.

London needlessly has lost too many of its best landmarks on the altar of progress. Sixteenth-century Northumberland House, finer than any of the royal palaces, was demolished to gleeful cheers to

make way for a new bridge across the Thames, which was never actually built. The Coal Exchange and the Euston Arch went the same way. Temple Bar is still waiting to be rebuilt in London, 150 years after it was taken to a Hertfordshire wood.

A new generation of philistine ministers must not be allowed to repeat this destruction. The cylinders must stay until they have to go, and then the money and the space must be found to re-erect them.

Branson and the other directors of LCR should heed the scathing words of the great Sir Nikolaus Pevsner on the destruction of the cast-iron Victorian Coal Exchange in 1962. "It is a tragedy, and it is unnecessary. Tragedy by stupidity always hurts double, more than tragedy by villainy as in the case of the Euston Arch."

## Natural modern master

IMAGINATIVE planning meant that the Endymion Ensemble's series of Composer's Choice Concerts was launched as part of the Harrison Birtwistle Retrospective and on Friday the composer himself introduced a rich programme of music from the 1950s onwards. Though it offered insights into his musical thinking, it revealed few stylistic influences. That was expected: Birtwistle has never needed models for what to him is the most natural way of expression.

One influence, however, was both audible and admitted: Stockhausen's *Zeitmasse*. In spite of its rigid serialism, it has a fluidity that inspired the younger composer. Scored for five woodwind instruments, it is like a craggy, partly eroded

### Endymion Ensemble Purcell Room

musical sculpture — and seems a little dated.

Birtwistle's recent *Five Distances for Five Instruments*, scored for a more conventional wind quintet, has the humanity lacking in *Zeitmasse*. Each instrument's character is brought to the surface in music of warmth and wit. Birtwistle also provided a mini-overture to the evening with the first London performance of a 19th-century present for Pierre Boulez: *Hoquetus Paris*. Two flutes and a piccolo trumpet try with a Machaut melody in bright, pulsing music.

The young composer, Jane Mielniczek, was invited to contribute a new work, and his premiere disclosed an imaginative musical mind. Scored for an octet of strings, wind and brass, *Bernard* is a tightly structured journey of transformation and reinvention that explores quirky rhythms and dark colours.

Two pieces from the 1970s completed the programme: John Buller's *Scribner* for solo cello was dispatched with panache by Jane Sampson, but it sounds like a catalogue of empty instrumental effects. In contrast, Peter Maxwell Davies's *Ave Maria Stella* is a classic of its time.

JOHN ALLISON

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS: A pianist, itinerant conductor and viola player all on top form

## A lone struggle to lift spirits

LSO/Tilson Thomas Barbican

bracing blast of Russian fresh air reminiscent of *Petrushka*, and the players responded to its snappy rhythms and bass-heavy sonorities with panache. The *Scènes de ballet* is

THE brilliant but idiosyncratic viola player Yuri Bashmet blotted his copybook last summer when he appeared at the Proms, apparently unprepared for a concert. Ample amends were made at the Barbican on Saturday when Bashmet and his Moscow Soloists gave a concert that, far from suggesting lack of preparation, demonstrated scrupulous attention to detail — almost to a fault.

The Moscow Soloists, founded by Bashmet in 1992, is an elite ensemble whose members represent the cream of the new generation of Russian string players. The unanimity of their ensemble is so precise that they are capable of stunning expressive effects.

This does not apply only to fast toccata-like passages, as the opening of their concert showed. Seventeen players, mostly standing, clustered in-

full of striking effects — not least the syrupy climax of the *Pas de deux* — but it was less invigorating.

Spirits were raised after the interval by Thibaudet — single-handedly, one is tempted to say. His formidable account of the Concerto for the Left Hand was full of power and excitement.

Thibaudet is a cultivated pianist, and he found every possible nuance in the concerto's delicately shaded score, from the nostalgia of the spiky syncopations that follow.

Tilson Thomas revelled in the intoxicating, sensual beauty of the *Daphnis and Chloe Suite No 2*, and avoided excessive lingering in a performance full of theatrical life.

JOHN ALLISON

### Moscow Soloists Barbican

timately round Bashmet, who, taking his viola, led them in Britten's *Lachrymae*. The dusky timbres of the first muted bars, alternating with exquisitely voiced chords, seized the attention. So too did Bashmet's richly burnished tone, which unfortunately was not heard again until the first of the encores (an arrangement of Tchaikovsky's celebrated *Andante cantabile*), as the viola was thereafter abandoned for the podium.

Under Bashmet's direction, Dvořák's *Serenade for Strings* also began extremely quietly and slowly, as though it were being coaxed into existence. Both here and in the flowing waltz it was evident that these players could do anything, so meticu-

lously tapered was their phrasing. And yet this was where the occasional doubt surfaced: was it just a little too calculated, too self-conscious?

For most of Stravinsky's *Apollo*, that doubt was suppressed. Here was sleek, silky yet chaste playing, ideal for Stravinsky's ballet about Apollo and the Muses. Balances were finely judged, and Bashmet's feeling for the long line effortlessly realised by the players. Only in Tchaikovsky's variation did I wonder whether the classical manner was momentarily compromised by self-indulgence.

The fleeting mood pictures of nine of Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, arranged by Rudolf Barshai, allowed these virtuosi to project the whole gamut of emotions, from the fearful strains of "Dolente" to the mordantly ferocious finale.

## When smaller is clearly better

Hallé/Brüggen Free Trade Hall, Manchester

IT TAKES years rather than days for a standard symphony orchestra such as the Hallé to get used to a specialist conductor like Frans Brüggen. He takes the strings apart, splitting the second violins from the first and radically redistributing the others.

He cuts down their numbers, changes their sound and requires on-the-beat precision without using a baton to facilitate it. Without a leader as diligent as Gina McCormack they would have had an even harder time of it.

After four years with his

modern-instrument orchestra in Stavanger, Brüggen has secured something like a period-instrument sound in the classical repertoire. After three concerts of Mozart and Haydn with the Hallé and another featuring Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, he will have gone from Manchester to turn his attention to another British orchestra.

He will have communicated something very positive about the textural clarity which can be achieved by re-deploying the forces and thinning down the line. In Haydn's *London Symphony* and Mozart's *Jupiter* all kinds of normally obscure detail were illuminated.

The negative aspect of such clarity is that faults such as an overloud entry in one area or another, a false note in the brass and even marginal failures in ensemble between woodwind and strings are glaringly obvious. But, as the audience clearly appreciated, with everything reduced to scale, dramatic events in scoring and harmony are restored to their full value.

Brüggen also enjoys working with Thomas Zehetmair. This time they collaborated on Mozart's Violin Concerto in A in a performance which, after an edgy start from the soloist, developed into a subtle dialogue with the orchestra.

BARRY MILLINGTON

GERALD LARNER

## Backstage passes

### THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

WHEN the curtain goes down on a play, most of the people in the audience shuffle out and go home. But not Theatre Club members — not those who go to see these three West End plays, at any rate. After the show, they are invited to stay behind to meet members of the company and discuss the production over a glass of wine.

The first is *Mind Millie For Me*, at the Haymarket Theatre. Following his huge success with Feydeau's *An Absolute Turkey*, Peter Hall has once again turned to the undisputed genius of French farce and brought together many of the same team, including designer Gerald Scarfe. The cast includes Nicholas le Prevost, Neil Pearson and Felicity Kendal. Club members are invited to discuss the production with Hall after the performance on May 9, before meeting members of the cast. Tickets £18 (normally £24). Tel 0171-930 8800.

On May 16, the show is Neil Simon's comedy *Chapter Two*, at the Gielgud Theatre. The stars are Tom Conti and Sharon Gless. Tickets £18 (normally £24). Tel 0171-494 5065.

Finally, the show on May 21 is *Passion*, at Queen's Theatre. Michael Ball and Maria Friedman star in Stephen Sondheim's Tony Award-winning new musical, directed by Jeremy Sams. Tickets £24 (normally £30). Tel 0171-494 5590.

### HOW TO BOOK — AND JOIN

TO BOOK, please phone the listed number during normal office hours. The price printed on the ticket you receive will be the special price negotiated by the Theatre Club. There may be a transaction charge to cover postage.

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### GLASGOW

The Arches

May 7-9, 13-14

● CLUB members can buy tickets at £3.50 (normally £4 to £7) for the Glasgow

Mayfest production, *Blood and Water*, with music by Andy Arnold. Tel 0141-221 9736

### BILLINGHAM

Forum Theatre

May 7-10

● TICKETS: £3 (normally £5) for *The Kidnap Game* by Tudor Gates. Tel 01642 552663

### BOLTON

Octagon Theatre

May 17-24

● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £8.75 to £12.50) for the Elizabethan tragedy *Edward the Second*, by Christopher Marlowe. Tel 01204 520661

### LEICESTER

Haymarket Theatre

May 4-25

● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £12.50 to £14.50) for all except Saturday evening performances of Peter Nichols' outrageous comedy *Private's on Parade*. Tel 0116-253 9797

### CROYDON

Warehouse Theatre

May 12, 14-15, 17

● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £6.95 to £8.95) for Peter Moffatt's bilingually funny *Iona Rain*. Tel 0181-680 4060

### PLYMOUTH

Theatre Royal

May 13-14

● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £7) for the world premiere of *Birdy*, based on William Wharton's novel. Tel 01752 267222

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Woodley 4:00:36: H Flueckiger  
4:00:38: S Cox 4:00:38: C Johnston  
4:00:38: B Raymer 4:00:38: S  
Kolle 4:00:39: J Evans 4:00:39: E  
Yates 4:00:40: S  
4:00:40: D Ludbrook 4:00:40: A  
Taylor 4:00:40: M Evans 4:00:40: C  
Blomfield 4:00:40: M Sizering  
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9.501 R Fryer 4:00:42: C Cremers  
4:00:42: N Mason 4:00:42: I Street  
4:00:42: P White 4:00:43: P Kearny  
4:00:43: S Mitchell 4:00:43: A  
Brodie 4:00:44: G Dunbar 4:00:44: S  
Stewart 4:00:44: S  
4:00:45: D Martin 4:00:45: A  
Hawkins 4:00:45: A Steele 4:00:46: S  
G Gee 4:00:46: S Perry 4:00:47: D  
Gornie 4:00:47: M Molyneux  
4:00:47: N Green 4:00:47: C Wells  
4:00:48: N Kawarua 4:00:49: A  
Parnell 4:00:49: C Williams  
4:00:50: P Haigh 4:00:50: B  
Edwards 4:00:51: J Johnson  
4:00:51: O Von Rebern 4:00:51: B  
Moore 4:00:52: J Dodd 4:00:52: D  
Watson 4:00:52: A Merritt 4:00:52: S  
G Bulson 4:00:52: P Shaw 4:00:53: S  
J Taylor 4:00:53: M Dix 4:00:54: G  
Sheppard 4:00:55: R Medley  
4:00:55: R Nell 4:00:55: J Martin  
Paule 4:00:56: S Weller 4:00:56: W  
Ross 4:00:56: S Taylor 4:00:56: D  
Bryant 4:00:56: S  
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McLachle 4:00:56: D Kichen  
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4:00:57: K Martin 4:00:57: S  
Hudson 4:00:57: M Wood 4:00:57: S  
M Ulley 4:00:58: C Brown 4:00:59: S  
R Tasken 4:00:59: M Bartley  
4:00:59: S M Switzer 4:01:00: S  
4:01:00: B Tribe 4:01:00: R  
Goodwin 4:01:00: M Blythe  
4:01:00: J Booth 4:01:00: S  
Roudard 4:01:00: B Evans 4:01:01: S  
Leph 4:01:01: S Upton 4:01:01: S  
Berridge 4:01:01: C Cernagone  
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Smith 4:01:03: I Paden 4:01:03: J  
Nesbitt 4:01:04: S Saunders  
4:01:04: A Irwin 4:01:04: R  
Chapman 4:01:04: S Eastwood  
4:01:05: C Guerin 4:01:05: T Clynch  
4:01:05: P Truscott 4:01:05: P  
Evinger 4:01:05: M Denevish  
4:01:05: P Brown 4:01:05: M James

\_\_\_\_\_











## Klairon Davis confirms Cheltenham mastery

A black and white photograph of a horse race. In the foreground, a dark-colored horse is galloping, with its jockey leaning forward in a racing posture. The jockey is wearing a light-colored shirt with a dark diamond pattern on the back. Behind this horse, another horse and jockey are visible, though less distinct. The race is taking place on a dirt track, with a wooden fence and a large crowd of spectators in the background. The image is high-contrast and grainy.

Dance Beat, trained by Jessica Harrington, was left to win comfortably and the British day did not improve. Power Coin was a well beaten third in the Bradstock Insurance Novices' Chase and Andros Prince occupied the same position in the Berkeley Hunt Handicap Chase, won by another of Moore's imports, Professor Strone.

# SOUTHWELL

er. 2.30 Instantaneous. 3.00  
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set. 5.00 Smile Forever.

SIS

NUMBERS BEST

SPENCER'S REVENGE 11 (B,C,D,F,G) N Tinkler 7.

16 (N,C,D,G,S) D Chapman 10-9-4 A Guthrie  
 EPLY 23 (F) F Lee 6-9-4 ..... A McGilver  
 23 (G,D,G,S) Mrs W Macleay 5-9-4  
 C Teague (5)  
 URS 7 (C,D,F,G) E Innes 7-9-1 ..... Kim Tinkler  
 C Widman 4-8-10 ..... C Rutler  
 R 16 (C,D,G) T Baron 3-8-10 ..... J Fortune  
 6 (D,S) J Arnold 4-8-10 ..... J Danno  
 MAGADY 195 (G) C Allen 3-7-10  
 Martin Dwyer (7)

other, 9-2 Spencer's Revenge, Peaceful Reply, 5-1 No S  
Pamgaddy, Athar, 10-1 others

**D APPRENTICE HANDICAP**

6 (CD,F,G) D Chapman 10-9-10 . . . . . P Fessey 7  
4 (CD,G) J Parke 4-9-5 . . . . . M Baird 5

INSTANTANEOUS 163 (C.D.F.G.) T Eastley 4-8-4 - J. Don  
MR MORIARTY 28J (C.D.G.) S Bowring 5-8-9 - C  
RED INDIAN 307 (C.D.F.G.) B Richmond 10-8-8 - J. Don

EST 16J S Meier 4-7-10 ... A Daly (3) 2

### APHRODITE CLAIMING STAKES

C.F.G) M Johnston 6-10-0 T Williams 4  
 LINE 11 (CD,G) R Hollinshead 4-10-0  
 F Lynch (S) 3  
 HOKER 28 (B,C,F,G) J Leigh 5-9-10  
 P Roberts (S) 1  
 TURE 5 (CD,G,S) M Chapman 6-9-8  
 D R McCabe (S) 3  
 GNIM 152 (CD,F,G,S) S Bowring 9-9-6

BUDDY'S FRIEND 11 (C.D.F.G.) R Williams 8-9-4. D  
MEZZORAMPO 37 (V.C.D.F.G.) R Williams 4-9-2. C. Scud

(6) C Wildman 10-9-1 ... G Ruffler 7  
 Fiddle 4-8-11 ... N Adams 5  
 ... 9-2 Sandpiper Denim, 6-1 Awesome Venture,  
 Friend, Saturn, 12-1 others

HERA MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAND  
381: 6f) (7)

|                                                                |                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Guest 9-0                                                      | W Woods 1        |
| T Barron 9-0                                                   | J Fortune 2      |
| ACE 243 8 Hanbury 9-0                                          | W Ryan 7         |
| AY 16 Mrs V Aconley 9-0                                        | T Williams 4     |
| riding 8-9                                                     | J Edmunds (7) 5  |
| 22 Mrs N McCauley 8-9                                          | C Teague (5) 5   |
| 22 Middleton 8-9                                               | T G McLaughlin 3 |
| Place 7-2 Frontman, 8-1 Chalice, 15-1 Napier Star, 16-1 Tonya. |                  |

**ACHILLES HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,381: 6)**

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| (B,CD,BF,6) S Bowring 9-7      | C Tague 5) 8    |
| 177 (B,D,5) M W Eastin 9-5     | G Parke 5) 6    |
| 8 R Hollender 9-1              | F Lynch 4) 4    |
| 39 (C,B,F,6) T Etherington 9-0 | J Fortune 1     |
| SYN 21 (F,6) J Berry 8-12      | P Feecey 5) 7   |
| 22 (BF) M Johnston 8-10        | T Williams 3    |
| NY 15 (CD,6) M Chapman 8-8     |                 |
|                                | D R McCabe 3) 8 |
| Ug 26 (B,D,F) H Collaghan 8-4  | J Golin 5       |
| Mellor 8-0                     | N Adams 2       |

9-2 Bee Health Boy, 5-1 Arlington Lady, 6-1 Dines-C, 8-1 Calsyth, 10-1 others.

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| BF, 5J J Berry 8-12              | P Fassey (5) 4 |
| 2, 6J N Bycroft 8-12             | G Barwell 8    |
| Whiston 8-12                     | J Quinn 6      |
| R Hollingshead 8-12              | F Lynch (5) 9  |
| (B, C, D, E, S) M. Johnston 8-12 | T Williams 7   |

PEOPLE DIRECT 11 (C,G) K McAuliffe 8-12 Dana O'Neil  
SHANDORA 15 (V,C,G) Mrs N Maczulay 8-12  
Amanda Savoy

37 R Spicer 8-7 ..... D R McCabe (3) 5  
11 R Simpson 8-7 ..... S Drowna (3)  
1 Loch Style, 5-1 Amoeba, 6-1 People Direct, 8-1

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**MAIDEN HANDICAP**

1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035 2036 2037 2038 2039 2040 2041 2042 2043 2044 2045 2046 2047 2048 2049 2050 2051 2052 2053 2054 2055 2056 2057 2058 2059 2060 2061 2062 2063 2064 2065 2066 2067 2068 2069 2070 2071 2072 2073 2074 2075 2076 2077 2078 2079 2080 2081 2082 2083 2084 2085 2086 2087 2088 2089 2090 2091 2092 2093 2094 2095 2096 2097 2098 2099 2100 2101 2102 2103 2104 2105 2106 2107 2108 2109 2110 2111 2112 2113 2114 2115 2116 2117 2118 2119 2120 2121 2122 2123 2124 2125 2126 2127 2128 2129 2130 2131 2132 2133 2134 2135 2136 2137 2138 2139 2140 2141 2142 2143 2144 2145 2146 2147 2148 2149 2150 2151 2152 2153 2154 2155 2156 2157 2158 2159 2160 2161 2162 2163 2164 2165 2166 2167 2168 2169 2170 2171 2172 2173 2174 2175 2176 2177 2178 2179 2180 2181 2182 2183 2184 2185 2186 2187 2188 2189 2190 2191 2192 2193 2194 2195 2196 2197 2198 2199 2200 2201 2202 2203 2204 2205 2206 2207 2208 2209 2210 2211 2212 2213 2214 2215 2216 2217 2218 2219 2220 2221 2222 2223 2224 2225 2226 2227 2228 2229 2230 2231 2232 2233 2234 2235 2236 2237 2238 2239 2240 2241 2242 2243 2244 2245 2246 2247 2248 2249 2250 2251 2252 2253 2254 2255 2256 2257 2258 2259 2260 2261 2262 2263 2264 2265 2266 2267 2268 2269 2270 2271 2272 2273 2274 2275 2276 2277 2278 2279 2280 2281 2282 2283 2284 2285 2286 2287 2288 2289 2290 2291 2292 2293 2294 2295 2296 2297 2298 2299 2300 2301 2302 2303 2304 2305 2306 2307 2308 2309 2310 2311 2312 2313 2314 2315 2316 2317 2318 2319 2320 2321 2322 2323 2324 2325 2326 2327 2328 2329 2330 2331 2332 2333 2334 2335 2336 2337 2338 2339 2340 2341 2342 2343 2344 2345 2346 2347 2348 2349 2350 2351 2352 2353 2354 2355 2356 2357 2358 2359 2360 2361 2362 2363 2364 2365 2366 2367 2368 2369 2370 2371 2372 2373 2374 2375 2376 2377 2378 2379 2380 2381 2382 2383 2384 2385 2386 2387 2388 2389 2390 2391 2392 2393 2394 2395 2396 2397 2398 2399 2400 2401 2402 2403 2404 2405 2406 2407 2408 2409 2410 2411 2412 2413 2414 2415 2416 2417 2418 2419 2420 2421 2422 2423 2424 2425 2426 2427 2428 2429 2430 2431 2432 2433 2434 2435 2436 2437 2438 2439 2440 2441 2442 2443 2444 2445 2446 2447 2448 2449 2450 2451 2452 2453 2454 2455 2456 2457 2458 2459 2460 2461 2462 2463 2464 2465 2466 2467 2468 2469 2470 2471 2472 2473 2474 2475 2476 2477 2478 2479 2480 2481 2482 2483 2484 2485 2486 2487 2488 2489 2490 2491 2492 2493 2494 2495 2496 2497 2498 2499 2500 2501 2502 2503 2504 2505 2506 2507 2508 2509 2510 2511 2512 2513 2514 2515 2516 2517 2518 2519 2520 2521 2522 2523 2524 2525 2526 2527 2528 2529 2530 2531 2532 2533 2534 2535 2536 2537 2538 2539 2540 2541 2542 2543 2544 2545 2546 2547 2548 2549 2550 2551 2552 2553 2554 2555 2556 2557 2558 2559 2560 2561 2562 2563 2564 2565 2566 2567 2568 2569 2570 2571 2572 2573 2574 2575 2576 2577 2578 2579 2580 2581 2582 2583 2584 2585 2586 2587 2588 2589 2590 2591 2592 2593 2594 2595 2596 2597 2598 2599 2600 2601 2602 2603 2604 2605 2606 2607 2608 2609 2610 2611 2612 2613 2614 2615 2616 2617 2618 2619 2620 2621 2622 2623 2624 2625 2626 2627 2628 2629 2630 2631 2632 2633 2634 2635 2636 2637 2638 2639 2640 2641 2642 2643 2644 2645 2646 2647 2648 2649 2650 2651 2652 2653 2654 2655 2656 2657 2658 2659 2660 2661 2662 2663 2664 2665 2666 2667 2668 2669 2670 2671 2672 2673 2674 2675 2676 2677 2678 2679 2680 2681 2682 2683 2684 2685 2686 2687 2688 2689 2690 2691 2692 2693 2694 2695 2696 2697 2698 2699 2700 2701 2702 2703 2704 2705 2706 2707 2708 2709 2710 2711 2712 2713 2714 2715 2716 2717 2718 2719 2720 2721 2722 2723 2724 2725 2726 2727 2728 2729 2730 2731 2732 2733 2734 2735 2736 2737 2738 2739 2740 2741 2742 2743 2744 2745 2746 2747 2748 2749 2750 2751 2752 2753 2754 2755 2756 2757 2758 2759 2760 2761 2762 2763 2764 2765 2766 2767 2768 2769 2770 2771 2772 2773 2774 2775 2776 2777 2778 2779 2780 2781 2782 2783 2784 2785 2786 278

HORPIPE 23 J Wharton 4-9-9..... S D WH  
MONTY 147 D Campbell 4-9-7..... N A

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1778 J Toller 3-9-5        | G Duffield 9          |
| W 16 Pat Mitchell 4-9-2    | Amanda Sanders (5) 15 |
| 1781 J Berry 3-9-1         | P Roberts (5) 6       |
| D 8 D O'Hanlon 3-0-0       | G Barwood 6           |
| Miss J Power 5-8-10        | A McGloire 2          |
| 13 Mrs A Sembrink 3-8-7    | J Fortune 12          |
| 13 J Winton 4-8-3          | J Quino 7             |
| N Macneely 4-8-2           | F Lynch (5) 5         |
| CON 202 M W Exterley 3-8-0 | G Panton (5) 14       |
| 1782 D F Lee 4-8-0         | C Rutter 13           |
| 1783 Deland 5-7-12         | F Norton 18           |

WALZOOM 53 S Matthews 4-7-12... J Far  
LINDAWATERSGUBADIVA 219 M Bielby 4-7-10.. A M

**USE SPECIALISTS**

4%; C Teague, 19 from 142, 13.4%, G Duffield, 21 from 108, 19.4%, J H. Johnson, 12 from 108, 11.1%, A McGinnis, 5 from 47, 10.6%.

100







# Floyd, on the high seas, flexes his mussels

There are two ways of looking at Keith Floyd — three if you include the one that begins "back to me, Chris, back to me". The first is that he is a man whose moment has passed. The collapse of his company-owned Devon pub marked the turning point of a career fuelled by charm and chutzpah, but curdled by hubris. If events follow their expected path all that is left now is to ride off into obscurity, wife and well-stocked wine cellar in tow, to await his turn in the *Where Are They Now?* columns.

The second is quicker — that Floyd may not be much good at business, but he still cuts the mustard on television. Which brings us to last night's *Floyd on Africa* (BBC2), better known, Best Beloved, as how the astute cook restored his fortune.

We began with an outrageous celebration of limited liability, with Floyd at the helm of a swanky

yacht off the Cape of Good Hope. He spanned some nonsense about wanting to arrive the same way the original European settlers had, but after umpteenth series we know a Floyd set-up when we see one and cooking mussels marinieres in a bumpy sea was a good one.

With the director succumbing to a convincing bout of seasickness (mal de marinieres?) the team was down to three — Floyd, Chris, the long-suffering camera operator, and someone to hold Chris up. "Just push him forward," came the order, as the arrival of chopped onions coincided with a nasty roll to port.

Amid smashing glass and clattering pots, Floyd exhibited the constitution of a hard-living, publicity-seeking, television cook — swigging champagne first from a glass (crash) and then from the bottle. In the circumstances, who can blame the mussels for choosing death by hot white wine?

However, after a brief pause for hypocrisy (Floyd ran up pork and greens in a post-apartheid, but men-only, shebeen) and a microlight flight over the Victoria Falls, the grating gourmet finally met his match — ostriches. Cooking ostrich stew while surrounded by a flock of outraged ostriches ("I can see some complaints coming in"), was provocative and contrived. But, at least from where this unrepentant meat-eater was sitting, also very funny. Nasty feeling I can see some complaints coming in about that too.

Few complaints, though, about *Edward on Edward* (ITV). The late hour of its appearance told us everything we needed to know. Namely, that Edward Windsor — Prince, producer and part-time meritorist — had discovered nothing new about his late great-uncle, Edward, Duke of Windsor.

## REVIEW



Matthew Bond

Good journalist that he aspires to be, Prince Edward (this, after all, was a documentary he was born to make rather than trained for) pretended otherwise for a few minutes. The true story of the Abdication had never been told, he whispered. "Ever since the private details of what happened then and afterwards have been guarded here at Windsor Castle." Murn, can I have the key?

Once it became clear the royal archive contained little more than a few family letters intended for the history books and the Duke's post-Abdication telephone bill (1930), he wisely abandoned conspiracies and got on with telling what remains a fascinating story.

In this first instalment, the Prince expanded the view that the Duke had never appreciated the full implications of abdicating, never anticipated a fall from public grace that would prevent him from returning permanently to this country.

To the Prince's credit, a number of serious charges were laid at his great-uncle's door. That he was selfish, stubborn, loose-tongued, an appeaser. But he cleared him of the long-standing allegation of collaboration with the Nazis. The programme, of course, would have been on a lot earlier if he hadn't.

A few things jarred, such as the description of the pre-Abdication

Prince of Wales as "popular and charismatic" and the use of the present tense to give meretricious immediacy to events that happened more than 50 years ago. Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable hour, enlivened by some splendidly terse telegrams dispatched by Churchill.

By contrast, nothing much enlivened *Without Walls: Not Fade Away* (Channel 4). Actually, that is not true. What is true is that ever since February 3, 1959 — "the most famous tragedy in the corpse-strewn history of rock music" — it's been raining in Philip Norman's heart, and it sounded like it. For much of this strangely personal voyage around Buddy Holly's brief life, Norman was merely depressing the company. Mind you, he would probably feel exactly the same if I banged on about Abba for an hour. It's a generation thing.

Norman, however, had done his homework — although it would take a real Holly expert to tell you just how new some of his discoveries were. They included evidence that he thumped women (take that, Peggy Sue), fathered an illegitimate child (and that, Peggy Sue) and that the Crickets came within a year-hair of so being called the Beatles. The happily (especially for Norman) puns were as big in Texas as they were on Merseyside.

My favourite contributors to this sad tale were Niki Sullivan — who gave up being a Cricketer after one tour, apparently to pursue a career in scrap metal — and Des O'Connor, who, 40 years after he shared the bill and a bedroom with Holly, is still worrying that he did not get due credit for lending him a few jokes. "They sounded so much funnier in his accent." Now that will be the day.

• Lynne Truss is on holiday.

## CHOICE

East: Relative Values (BBC2, 7.30pm)

Here is an encouraging success story from Britain's Asian community. Through hard work and a passionate belief in education, they have shown a striking ability to rise from unpromising circumstances. Anasrah Mir's report returns to a deprived area of inner-city Southampton filmed 20 years ago. The programme made them record the aspirations of new immigrants. One was a Sikh who arrived in Britain with £3 in his pocket. Two of his sons are doctors. A family which runs a clothing shop has three sons with degrees, all in successful careers. In the country as a whole more Asians than whites, proportionately, stay in full-time education and more go to university. But this happy picture does not apply to many Asian girls, who are still expected to forgo careers in favour of early marriage.

Modern Times: Streetwise (BBC2, 9.00pm)

The Knowledge is what London cabbies need to ply their trade. It means knowing an instant how to find their way from one part of the capital to another. The green badge of office does not come easily. It can take two years at least and the oral interrogations are gruelling. Mark Phillips's captivating film lets us in on these sessions for the first time. The examiners are former police officers and on this evidence they are not disposed to coddle charm or put candidates at their ease. The inquirers are typified by a Mr. Ernie, who has grown men quaking in fear as they wait outside his door. A stern traditionalist, he says his nightmare is cab drivers wearing designer string vests over their beer guts. On the other side of the desk is she sings in public like most of us sing in private. The personality is the talent. The show follows her to Edinburgh for her British debut concert at last year's festival. James is never far off camera, or from Pracatan's thoughts. It is uncanny how everybody she meets, from a cab driver to Doris, Jameson, talks her about Clive James. It is hard to decide whether she is plugging him or he is promoting her. Either way, both are delighted with the result. Peter Waymark

Dispatches: Channel 4, 9.00pm

Sammi Mallie's report is an attempt to piece together the story of the IRA ceasefire and to explain why it came to an end. He is more successful with his first aim than his second. Although the series of secret talks which led to the ceasefire have looked into the public domain, Mallie is able to provide more shape and detail. He traces the story back to 1988 and the crucial first meetings between John Hume and Gerry Adams. He stresses the contribution of the former Northern Ireland Secretary, Peter Brooke, in agreeing to government contacts with Sinn Féin. And he reveals a key encounter between Albert Reynolds and John Major as the Downing Street declaration was being thrashed out. But as to what caused the IRA to resume bombing, and its current intentions, Mallie can only speculate.

Clive James Introduces Margarita Pracatan (ITV, 10.40pm)

Clive James is never one to leave his name off the titles of his shows and although this one is supposed to be about a colourful Cuban entertainer, it turns out to be as much about him. Margarita Pracatan is a flamboyant performer of uncertain age, who belts out songs with little respect for either the words or the tune. As James puts it, she sings in public like most of us sing in private. The personality is the talent. The show follows her to Edinburgh for her British debut concert at last year's festival. James is never far off camera, or from Pracatan's thoughts. It is uncanny how everybody she meets, from a cab driver to Doris, Jameson, talks her about Clive James. It is hard to decide whether she is plugging him or he is promoting her. Either way, both are delighted with the result. Peter Waymark

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6.00am GMTV (2353340)

9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (s) (7752705)

9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (5576144)

10.00 The Time... The Place (s) (219637)

10.35 This Morning (4489637)

12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (5596873)

12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (2423434)

12.55 Shortland Street (s) (3430453) 1.25

Coronation Street (s) (Teletext) (5593295) 2.00

Home and Away (54379347) 2.25

Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (5438005) 2.50

Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (4624569)

3.20 News headlines (Teletext) (7489724)

3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (7489095)

3.30 Alphabet Castle (s) (s) (8524279) 3.40

Wizards (7322200) (s) (s) 3.50

The Dream Below (s) (7336434) 4.00

Garfield and Friends (2514811) 4.20

How 2 (Teletext) (5237705) 4.40

Spellbinder (Teletext) (5005569)

5.10 A Country Practice (s) (2521388)

5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (907637)

6.00 Home and Away (s) (Teletext) (447231)

6.25 HTV News (Teletext) (948347)

7.00 Wish You Were Here...? Linda

Lusardi visits the Dominican Republic on an all-inclusive activity holiday. Judith

Chalmers is in Oman to sightsee, shop and cruise through the desert in a four-wheel-drive truck (3005)

7.30 Coronation Street. The women of

Westfield rock (Teletext) (347)

8.00 FILM: Rocky V (1990). Rocky returns

from Russia to find that his fortune has

been lost by a crooked accountant. A

young fighter begs Rocky to train him and

life looks good — until he defects to the

opposing camp and starts goading his

former mentor, with Sylvester Stallone

and Burt Young. Directed by John G.

Avildsen (Teletext) (s) (4811)

10.00 News and weather (Teletext) (48415)

10.30 Regional News (Teletext) (747347)

11.00 News and weather (Teletext) (48415)

11.30 Regional News (Teletext) (747347)

12.00 News and weather (Teletext) (48415)

12.30 Regional News (Teletext) (747347)

1.00 God's Gift (8956551)

2.00 Dear Nick (7295564)

3.05 Bushell on the Box (s) (s) (38376729)

3.35 Murder, She Wrote (s) (8992903)

4.30 The Time... The Place (s) (89903)

5.00 Cover Story (s) (43105)

5.30 Morning News (38187)

6.00am GMTV (2353340)

9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (s) (7752705)

9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (5576144)

10.00 The Time... The Place (s) (219637)

10.35 This Morning (4489637)

12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (5596873)

12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (2423434)

12.55 Shortland Street (s) (3430453) 1.25

Coronation Street (s) (Teletext) (5593295) 2.00

Home and Away (54379347) 2.25

Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (5438005) 2.50

Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (4624569)

3.20 News headlines (Teletext) (7489724)

3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (7489095)

3.30 Alphabet Castle (s) (s) (8524279) 3.40

Wizards (7322200) (s) (s) 3.50

The Dream Below (s) (7336434) 4.00

Garfield and Friends (2514811) 4.20

How 2 (Teletext) (5237705) 4.40

Spellbinder (Teletext) (5005569)

5.10 A Country Practice (s) (2521388)

5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (907637)

6.00 Home and Away (s) (Teletext) (447231)

6.25 HTV News (Teletext) (948347)

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# SPORT

WEDNESDAY APRIL 24 1996

**BOWLS 50**  
WHEELCHAIRS GIVEN  
FULL RUN  
OF THE GREENS

England coach experiments with adventurous formation against Croatia

## Bold Venables to follow Dutch example

By ROB HUGHES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE world of football is intrigued by England. It sees their might and their power, but observers might wonder how, at Wembley Stadium tonight, England will adapt to tactics that they have ignored for almost a decade.

The quality of Robbie Fowler, whom England will blood against Croatia in his first full international, two weeks after his 21st birthday, is known, but it is also recognised that Croatia, when fully motivated, are one of the most awesome teams on the Continent.

"Croatia are a force of nature," Arrigo Sacchi, the Italy coach, said a couple of nights ago. "On their night, they have so much ability they take the ball from you and never give it back, which is what happened to us in Palermo." Sacchi was referring to the night when Croatia went to Italy and beat the favourites for the European championship, on hostile ground, 2-1.

Make no mistake, Wembley means as much to Croatians as to almost any footballers on the Continent. It became a

mission to many of the team when, last year, the original match was scrubbed by the Football Association because of the war in the former Yugoslavia. England, one feels, would play in a dishcloth if Umbro paid them to do it: Croatia pull on a shirt designed on the national flag, in red and white squares, and they do it with the incentive of soldiers.

So when, on Monday night, their players flew in from the seven different countries in which they perform club duty, each and every one of them at once asserted at their St Albans hotel their readiness to play. Three of them, the captain, Zvonimir Boban, Robert Prosinecki and Alen Boksic, all struggling with leg injuries, hid any pain they felt yesterday to prove their capability for Wembley, and the coach, Miroslav Blazevic, endorsed the players' feelings by immediately refusing an official reception at the Croatian Embassy, insisting that his men had to be fully focused, "friendly" or not.

And so, to England. One

would never know from Terry Venables's jaunty mood that he has shaped a team to meet one of the best of opponents after losing ten of his squad to injuries and diplomatic withdrawals. His response is sheer boldness, going fully into the tactical approach that he so admires from Ajax of Amsterdam.

True, Liverpool and Aston Villa have made a success this season of playing variations on the continental theme of three at the back, but Venables, as Ajax uniquely do, has chosen only one recognised central defender, Mark Wright, recalled after almost four years out of the national reckoning, and for some of those years even out of favour at Liverpool.

Wright, at 32 a proven defender in this mobile "free" role, is flanked to his right by Gary Neville and to his left by Stuart Pearce, players at opposite ends of the age and experience spectrum, both of them full backs required tonight to man-mark Alen Boksic and Davor Suker, who are regarded as two of the most elusive and predatory strikers in the game.

Certainly, Neville has never come across such a ghosting figure as Boksic, while Pearce, for all his 63 caps, will wrestle with something extra special in the tall, guardsman-like, dark-haired Suker, whose international record is played 17, scored 17.

In the heart of midfield, Paul Gascoigne, having made his one-man stand in favour of Venables continuing as national coach, yesterday added a one-liner: he called on Fifa, the world governing body, to protect him from the yellow cards of Scottish referees.

His protection on the field tonight will come again from Paul Ince, with David Platt, returning as captain, adding intelligent care, it is to be hoped, to prevent Boban from running midfield.

Could this be the last opportunity, some critics ask, for



Venables, right, keeps a close eye on Fowler, who will make his full debut, during training yesterday

Platt? The man is 29, and there is one statistic which suggests that it is rash indeed to write him off: his 26 goals for England, in 56 internationals, are more than the accumulated total of all the rest of the squad.

The wings of England are entrusted again to the pugnacious Steve Stone, on the right, and to the effervescent, some-

times hypnotic, Steve Manaman on the left. Then the strikers: Teddy Sheringham, the sorcerer, and Fowler, the apprentice. Sheringham has fooled many people, but not Venables.

Sheringham's apparent lack of pace is more than compensated for by his quickness of mind. He is now a fixture, the withdrawn forward who cre-

ates for others. Fowler, the most natural finisher since Gary Lineker, the scorer of 84 goals in three seasons with Liverpool, said yesterday that he was surprised, at 21, to get the chance. Surprised? Pele was 17 when he played in a World Cup, Paolo Maldini 18, and Patrick Kluevert also 18 when his goal won the European Cup final for Ajax.

"Now I know it's going to happen, I'm well proud," Fowler said. "You get people who want to be pilots and things like that, but from day one I wanted to play football, and if the chance comes I'll score for England." His confidence is admirable, but let us not be too hasty tonight in comparing him to the finished product, Suker.

## Genius born of technical merit

David Miller likens Fowler's skills to those of goalscorers who have passed into legend

Either of two qualities, usually both, separate the international player from the average: exceptional technique and character. The second is sometimes enough on its own, as with Jack Charlton, Roger Hunt, Gary Stevens, Steve Coppell or Stuart Pearce. The first seldom is.

Robbie Fowler has the first, in bundles, and seems also to have, at least with Liverpool, the second. Tonight, we may see if he can reveal both for England against Croatia.

Few players can explain their brilliance, any more than can a chess grandmaster. Stanley Matthews could not. How does anyone explain the perfection of balance that is born in them? Could Fonteyn? Understanding the necessary application of thousands of hours' practice to exploit that perfection is another matter.

Yesterday, when Fowler was selected for his first full senior match by Terry Venables, I asked him what he had practised the most while developing as a young

player with Liverpool. The answer was not evasive or naive, but predictable. "Just the ordinary things," he said. Genius is not born of practice. Liverpool know that great football comes from doing ordinary things better than other teams do them. Within this framework, the spontaneous technique of a Fowler will naturally assert itself. Indeed it has, with 66 goals in the past two seasons.

Where Fowler, and Liverpool are fortunate, and we must hope England, too, is that he is free of nerves. His mind, and his muscles, are not twisted by tension. Jimmy Greaves suffered inner torments off the field, but on it he scored goals as simply as posting letters. Fowler is different from Greaves, but the simplicity is similar.

When Fowler says "it may be a cliché but I play each game as it comes," you believe

him. The same when he says that he had not really thought about Euro '96. "I was happy to play at club level and anything else was a plus."

The secret of Fowler's goalscoring is not really a secret at all. It is technical, and in passing was mentioned by Venables yesterday. It is the closeness with which he places the non-kicking foot to the ball, enabling him to strike it, as Venables said, "so straight and true".

An example was Fowler's left-footed goal late in the FA Cup semi-final against Aston Villa, struck with exceptional power for someone relatively short and slight. Pure timing and balance.

Most people attempting to kick a football place the standing foot wide and behind, so that the ball flies high and crooked, being hit underneath and on the side. When the static foot is close, then the

head and shoulders are over the ball, so that it stays low, the kicking knee having to be flexed and the ball struck centrally just below the middle circumference.

Perfect strikers, like Fowler, were Mortensen, Law, and Hurst. Mortensen's free kick that put Blackpool level 3-3 against Bolton Wanderers in the 1953 Cup Final was hit, bolt upright, through the eye of a needle. Hurst's memorable fourth goal in the World Cup final was similarly struck on the run. There was never a better example of perfect technique than the shot from Law that beat Banks in the 1963 FA Cup Final.

The expectation being placed on Fowler is unavoidably heavy. Football Association officials were yesterday trying to shield him without hiding him. Yet a successor to Lineker is so urgently needed, the other candidates at centre forward, Shearer, Ferdinand, Sheringham and Collymore having scored only 11 goals between them. Hurst, a former wing half, only emerged as an England striker shortly before the World Cup during the 1965-6 season. Although Fowler is at present "reserve", all is yet possible. "That's what they're here for," Venables said meaningfully in reference to those called up because of injury to others.

"He's improved again this season," Venables said of Fowler. "He's a very cool customer and, as they say, the nearer the goal, the harder it gets. We can't compare him with Greaves, Hurst and others from the past, because we're looking at their whole careers."

Fowler's international career is just about to begin, and Croatia, viewed as potential winners of the European championship, will be as tough a test as any could be.



Law employs the balance and brilliant technique that made him the perfect striker

## Gloucester set out to improve survival prospects

By DAVID HANDS  
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

GLOUCESTER, whose unexpected triumph over Bath a fortnight ago has created such an exciting climax to rugby union's Courage Clubs Championship, will descend on Leicester this evening with every expectation of laying low the 1995 league champions.

Ten days ago, Richard Hill, Gloucester's director of coaching, considered sending a second XV to Welford Road in order to conserve the energies of his better players for the first-division relegation dog-fight with Saracens at Kingsholm on Saturday. Now, a bullish Hill says: "We have a realistic chance of beating Leicester, particularly in a midweek night match."

"We are going there with the intention of winning and, if we can do that, it will leave us free to enjoy ourselves on Saturday. Leicester are showing signs of tiredness — everyone is at the end of a hard season."

"We are not out to do anyone any favours. We are looking after our own interests and there is no question of fielding an under-strength team which would put Bath's points difference in danger. The sooner we can ensure our first-division survival, the better."

Hill's optimism will certainly reassure his former colleague at Bath, John Hall, now the league leaders' director of rugby. Bath supporters had feared an avalanche of Leicester points tonight, reducing their points difference of 85 prior to the league final on Saturday, when Bath play Sale and Leicester conclude against Harlequins.

Hill will take a squad of 30 players to Leicester and says he will field a side "similar to that which beat Bath". He is likely to rest such players as Rob Fidler, Phil Greening, Peter Giamvile and Mark Mapletton in the hope they will be fit against Saracens. The second-teamers who come in will be highly motivated," Hill added. "They have been looking forward to this chance."

Leicester, whose 22-match winning run came to an end against a World XV at Twickenham on Sunday, will be without Neil Back and Aaen Kadooni. Their places at flanker and scrum half go to Bill Drake-Lee and Jamie Hamilton.

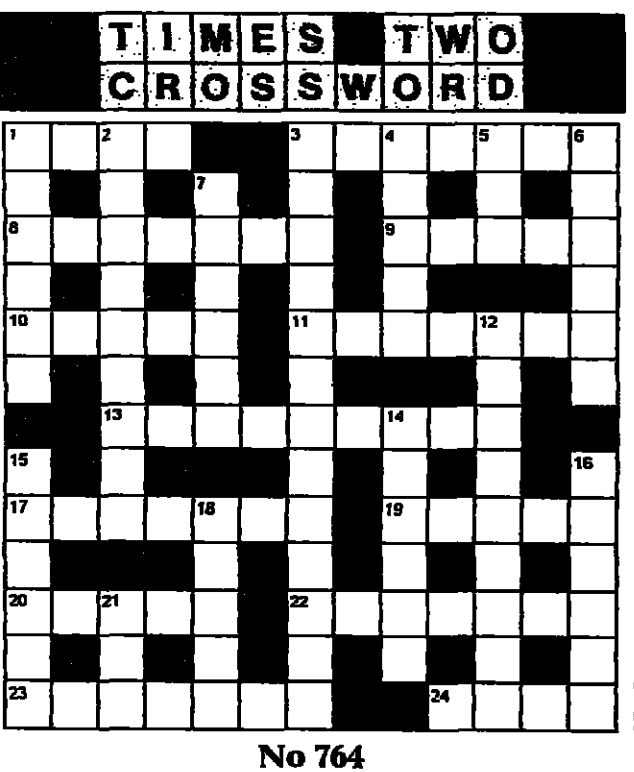


Wright: free role

### TEAMS

ENGLAND (3-5-1-1): D. Seaman (Arsenal); G. Neville (Manchester United); M. Wright (Liverpool); S. Pearce (Nottingham Forest); S. Stone (Nottingham Forest); D. Platt (Arsenal); P. Ince (Internazionale); P. Gascoigne (Rangers); S. McManaman (Liverpool); E. Sheringham (Tottenham Hotspur); R. Fowler (Liverpool). Substitutes to be named.

CROATIA (3-5-2): D. Ladic (Croatia Zagreb); I. Stancic (Derby County); N. Jerkan (Osijek); S. Bilic (West Ham United); N. Jurcovic (Rangers); R. Prosinecki (Barcelona); Z. Boban (Milan); A. Asanovic (Hajduk Split); R. Jami (Real Betis); D. Suker (Sevilla); A. Boksic (Lazio).



### ACROSS

- 1 Anguish: rib of eg lamb (4)
- 3 Gruesome (7)
- 8 Oatmeal cake (7)
- 9 100 mph (biker) (3-2)
- 10 Range: brush; Sooty's friend (5)
- 11 Underwater missile (7)
- 13 Business term: news agency (9)
- 17 Idle (esp. actor) (7)
- 19 Horse-dealer (5)
- 20 Person, language of S India/Sri Lanka (5)
- 22 Road-transport business (7)
- 23 Do the same as others (7)
- 24 Cowshed (4)

### DOWN

- 1 Sturdy, vigorous (6)
- 2 Agreement of opinion (9)
- 3 Stir up a lot of activity (4,6,3)
- 4 Make provision (for) (5)
- 5 Veto (3)
- 6 Hire, use (6)
- 7 (Detachable) voucher; pools entry (6)
- 12 Serving as model, as warning (9)
- 14 Accumulate (interest) (6)
- 15 (Art) judge (6)
- 16 Decorated band round wall (6)
- 18 Ice house (5)
- 21 Provide with staff; an island (3)

### SOLUTION TO NO 763

ACROSS: 1 Rabble 7 Asylum 9 Priority 11 Bade 12 Pater 13 Browne 15 Invest 17 Domed 19 Deal 20 Ordinance 22 Radish 23 Canyon

DOWN: 1 Wrap up 2 Deli 3 Sawyer 4 Sme 6 Built on sand 8 Loadsmoney 10 Range 14 Ogden 16 Soothe 18 Dyeing 19 Dark 21 Dice

### SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 759

ACROSS: 1 Overtake 5 Laze 9 Topsy 10 Orchard 11 Sputnik 12 Audit 13 Disappear 18 Lehar 20 Transit 22 So-and-so 23 Grimy 24 Dado 25 Offender

DOWN: 1 Obtruse 2 Exposed 3 Try on 4 Knock spots off 6 Award 7 Sedate 8 Scrape 14 Stride 15 Rescind 16 Closed 17 Stayer 19 Hoard 21 Argue

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## MARATHON

PAGES 40-42

First hit

## Tor glir hop

## PLO ends fight against Israel

The PLO's decision to end its 15-year armed struggle against Israel, which was announced yesterday, was a historic move from its charter as a resistance force to the Jewish state. A spokesman said the PLO's decision was a result of the peace process and the role of the PLO in the future. The decision was confirmed by a vote of 94 in favour and 10 against at a meeting in Amman.

## Clinton threat to Sinn Fein

President Clinton's threat to sever relations with Sinn Fein if it resumed its campaign to reunite Ireland, which was announced yesterday, was a historic move from its charter as a resistance force to the Jewish state. A spokesman said the PLO's decision was a result of the peace process and the role of the PLO in the future. The decision was confirmed by a vote of 94 in favour and 10 against at a meeting in Amman.



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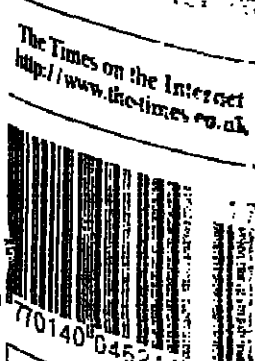
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